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The Essential Wiswell Trivia

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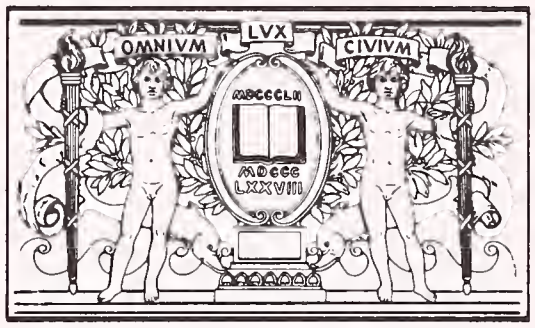

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THE ESSENTIAL WISWELL TRIVIA

A FAMILY SCRAPBOOK

Compiled, Edited, Narrated
And Embellished By

MILTON U. WISER

Lakeland, Florida

1990 - 1992

CS71
.W818
1992x

Often, when I was
working on this, she
would ask, "When will
it be finished?" And
I would answer, "Some-
time, sometime."

Now it is sometime, Kay,
and here it is, for you,
with love and gratitude.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Table of Contents

This book is a collection of sketches, essays and summaries. I think they can be read in any order and still make some sense. I hope the reader can detect a fragile relationship among them, a thin strand of continuity.

The parts are listed here as a fore-warning of their content. They were not written in the order in which they appear, nor did the events described occur in that order. This is an odd method of presentation, I admit, fitting no pattern or mold of which I was aware. Necessity is the mother of invention. What you get is what you see.

The spacings in this list are meant to serve appearance and readability. They have no other significance.

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The Essential Wiswell Trivia

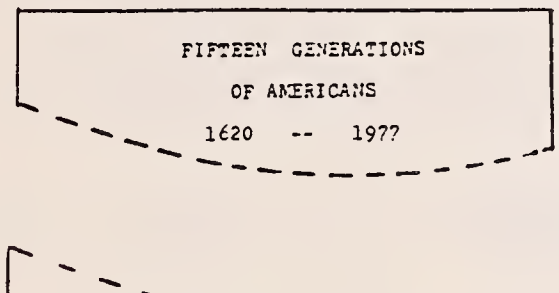
An Introduction, An Explanation and A Warning

Why this?

Good question! One reason - a writer's persistent, unscratchable itch to make marks, to imagine, to gossip, to portray, to lie a little. Another - the genealogist's self-appointed mis-guided mission to astound the world with revelations transcending the secrets of the Pyramids.

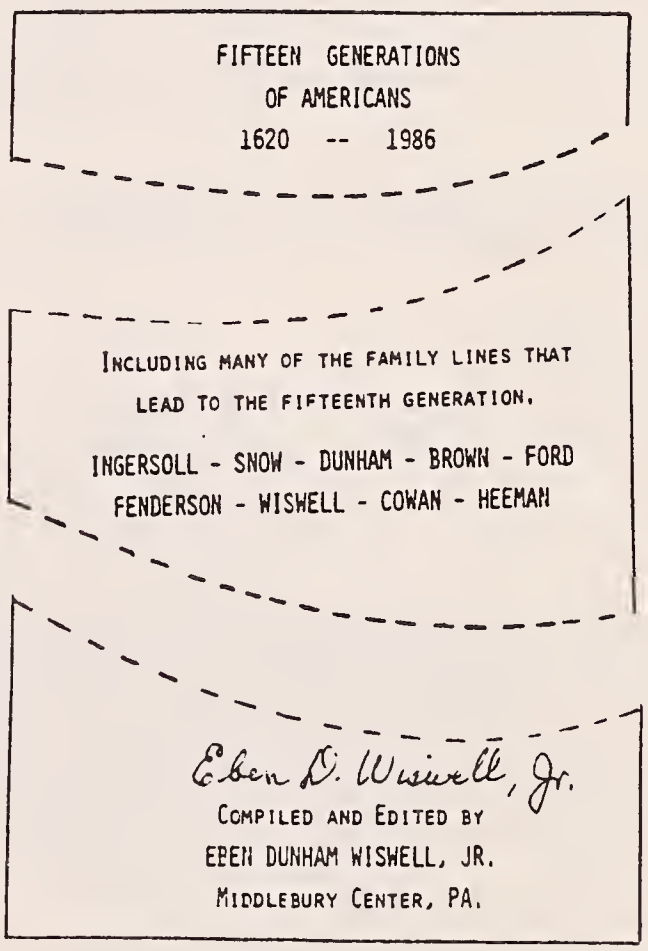
Primary Inspiration

This book deals, in part, with the genealogical history written by Eben D. Wiswell, first issued in 1977. A revised, updated and expanded version appeared nine years later. Each edition carried the same Fifteen Generations of Americans title, with appropriate dates. The title pages are reproduced below, miniaturized and truncated. Any mention herein to FGA refers to the later issue. The terms Mr. Wiswell, Eben or simply Wiswell designate himself, Eben D. Wiswell.


FIFTEEN GENERATIONS
OF AMERICANS
1620 -- 1977

Including some of the family lines that lead to the fifteenth generation.
INGERSOLL - SNOW - DUNHAM - BROWN - FORD
FENDERSON - WISWELL - COWAN - HEEMAN

Compiled and Edited by
EBEN DUNHAM WISWELL, JR.
Middlebury Center, Pa.


FIFTEEN GENERATIONS
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FENDERSON - WISWELL - COWAN - HEEMAN

Eben D. Wiswell, Jr.
COMPILED AND EDITED BY
EBEN DUNHAM WISWELL, JR.
MIDDLEBURY CENTER, PA.

I was first exposed to Wiswell family history by my wife Katherine, Eben's sister. For years she carefully collected and recorded family facts, largely vital statistics. The introduction to FGA graciously acknowledges her contribution.

When Eben first released his history I was interested but fully occupied with time-wasting projects of my own devising. The revision appeared when I had ample time to examine it closely. This led to a real appreciation of his efforts, his dogged pursuit of knowledge, his accumulative patience and precise arrangement of details and facts. Careful review of FGA induced me to point out a few minor discrepancies in dates and a typographical slip or two, and to prepare a series of charts illustrating the family descents involved. Copies of these were subsequently distributed as a part of a supplement to the 1986 FGA.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

An Introduction, An Explanation and A Warning

Initial Efforts

I became a diligent, inexpert genealogical researcher, considering the facilities available locally and my disinclination to travel. My researches, often redundant and inefficient, turned up lots about the Wiswells, et al, and about the Wiser family too.

I put the Wiswell data aside, temporarily, and concentrated on my own family. The result - four books in which my sister and I outlined the histories of our four grandparents. That done, I can turn again to the Wiswell material ripening in my notes.

Nature of Content

Eben, in compiling FGA, evaluated masses of data and on occasion had to make probably painful decisions as to what to exclude. Items pertinent and intriguing but not essential to his purpose were left for another day. There is nothing here of the scope or chronological sweep of FGA. My aim is not defined. The constraints that Eben faced are absent. The style is episodic; continuity is casual, perhaps even accidental.

I have selected from the items Eben rejected and from gems I found myself. I hope readers, Wiswell or no, may find them interesting.

Word Of Caution

I may seem obsessed with details. My views, alas, are not universally accepted. Nuances that please me may be abhorent to others. If you persevere, as you must, this may be less boring than you think at the moment.

My observation point is that of a concerned but somewhat suspicious spectator with a marvelous gift of unerring hindsight. Never do I resist a temptation to express personal insights regarding my in-law family, current or retrospective. They may be irreverent but none is meant to be disrespectful.

This is not apologia! Every bit is intentional! Let the reader beware! Wear boots for the heavy going!

Penultimate Final Word

I am compelled to comment about the apparent imbalance of family information. There is much here about the Ingersoll family, simply because I had much to work with. In other cases information was sketchy. Dates of birth, marriage and death are usually available, but these provide little on which to build a narrative.

Final Word

When first I undertook this task, I planned to describe everything briefly, beautiful and succinctly. To my dismay I was unable to narrate meaningful events or facts without first providing pertinent background. Without such explanations, readers would be denied a fair opportunity to appreciate these golden words. It may be neccessary to carve away expository fat to find lean meat.

What's In A Name - An Exercise in Futility

Whence Wiswell?

FGA, in a short preamble, offers a centuries-old legend explaining the derivation of the name Wiswell, hinting at a knowledge of others. I cannot judge the plausibility of such claims; nonetheless I presume to comment and suggest. True, I may aggravate the confusion rather than eliminating or even alleviating it.

Here's the FGA hypothesis: in 798 AD an incident in a Lancashire battle gave rise to calling a walled spring or well WIGARWEALLA - Hero's Well. Over time this became WIGA'S WELL and centuries later had been corrupted to WISWELL. It's logical. People living there claimed the place name as their surname, when that became fashionable. Battles were common before the rule of Egbert, the first King of a united(?) England, who ruled briefly from 829 to 831. All of this was 60 years before Alfred the Great.

Answer me this: suppose the 798 victors had memorialized the wall around the spring and called the place WIGA'S WALL. Ergo - WISWALL - which would probably please those who use that spelling.

A dull but lucid paragraph in Origins of English Place Names discusses the etymological derivations of "well" and "wall." To demonstrate:

Source	'Spring' Spelling	Middle English	Modern English Word, prefix or suffix
Anglian, Kentish	Wella	Wells	well, wells, wel
Saxon	Wealla	Wall	well, wells, wel
West Saxon	Wealla	Wills, Walls	will, wills, wil
Mercian	Waella	Walle	walls, walls, wal

These data support claims of Wiswells and Wiswalls alike, all stemming from 'spring' rather than 'wall.'

The New Dictionary of American Family Names gives the derivation of Wiswell or Wiswall as a person coming from township Wiswall, one who lived near the Wissey River in Lancashire. This poses a question. The Brittanica Atlas lists a Wissey River at 52 degrees 33 minutes North Latitude and zero degrees 21 minutes East Longitude which would place it in southern Staffordshire. The maps available to me show many unlabeled streams in Staffordshire flowing north into Lancashire, but nowhere is there a specifically named Wissey River in either shire.

The index of The Times Atlas of the World (Eighth Comprehensive Edition) lists a Wissey River in Norfolk. Sure enough, the River Wissey appears on the referenced map, so labeled, apparently rising west of Norwich and flowing west to the Ouse River which moves northwest to "The Wash" and the North Sea. Norwich is about 200 miles from Lancashire.

JBT states rather bluntly, "Wiswell is a place name deriving from a village of that name in Whalley, Lancashire. It means Wiswell, well being a spring, but what Wis means is lost in history."

An Etymological Dictionary of Family and Christian Names states that the name Wiswall comes from a locality, Weisweil, a town in Baden, on the Rhine, in Germany.

What's In A Name - An Exercise in Futility

Whence Wiswell?, continued

Let's pursue another tack. The Genealogical Gazetteer of England (An Alphabetic Dictionary of Places) lists each parish, chapelry, hamlet, township, etc. in England's ecclesiastical organization in 1831, thus:

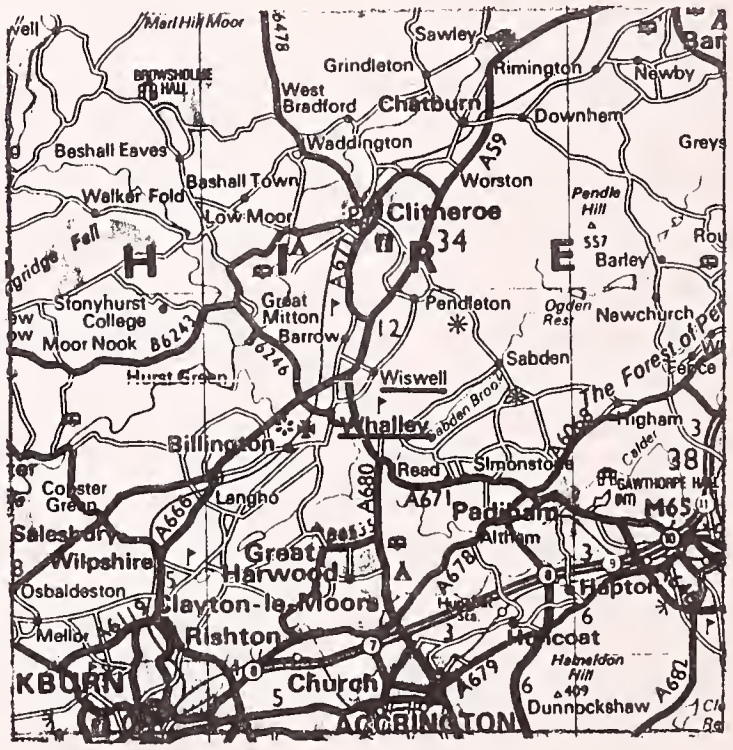
WISWELL - township, parish Whalley, Lancs. pop 724

WHALLEY - a parish dating from 1538, covering 3 market towns, a borough, 13 chapelries and 41 townships in Lancashire and one township in the West Riding of Yorkshire, all listed by name, all in the Wesleyan Methodist diocese of Chester in 1831, and including Wiswell, the Lancashire township.

We refer to Genealogical Atlas of England and Wales to find, hidden away on a map of northeastern Lancashire, the town of Wiswall. See below, left. The Comprehensive Road Atlas of Britain carried a detailed map of the same section of Lancashire, and shows the town of Wiswell on the same spot as Wiswall. On the right, below.

Map from The Genealogical Atlas of England and Wales. The area covered by this map is approximately 16 miles square.

Map from The Comprehensive Road Atlas of Britain. The area covered by this map is approximately 12 miles square.



The Essential Wiswell Trivia

The Wiswells In England

Sources

Six sources were gleaned for information regarding the Wiswells in England before 1635. The results were not very rewarding. For easier reference, initials have been assigned to each source, as stand-ins for the lengthier titles.

(CAW) Clarence Augustus Wiswall - A Wiswall Line - Ten Generations in Descent. This is a 59-page pamphlet, very little on a single page.

(AT) Reverend Anson Titus - The Wiswall Family In America - Four Generations. A 4-page leaflet.

(FJ) Francis Jackson - History Of The Early Settlement of Newton devotes pages 451-460 to Wiswalls who lived in Newton, MA from 1639-1800.

(JBT) John Brooks Threlfall - Fifty Great Migration Colonists To New England and Their Origins. In pages 519-528 there are sketchy outlines of three generations of Wiswells in England.

(FGA) Eben Dunham Wiswell. Jr. - Fifteen Generations Of Americans 1620-1986 provides some information regarding earlier generations of Wiswells. This was probably derived from Joseph M. Wiswall's The Wiswall Descendants of Leofwine the Saxon (JMW-1).

(JMW-2) Joseph M. Wiswall - A chart of descent in England and in America, from Leofwine to the present date.

Information Obtained

(CAW) states that Thomas and John Wiswell, when they came to America, left several brothers in England, but does not identify them and does not mention any antecedents.

(FJ) confirms that John and Thomas had brothers and names them as Adam, Aliel and Jonathan. No parents or other forebears are mentioned.

(AT) names no one in England other than the two emigrating brothers.

(JBT) outlines briefly the ancestry of Thomas and John but only as far as their paternal grandfather.

(JMW-1) provides the same data as listed for (FGA) and is probably the source of it.

(FGA) provides names, dates and places for the direct line of principals of generations in England prior to Thomas and John.

(JMW-2) confirms the data in (JMW-1) as used in (FGA).

Differences in data as taken from (JMW-1) and (JMW-2) and that from (JBT) are charted in the Lancaster Wiswells section, following.

The Wiswells In England

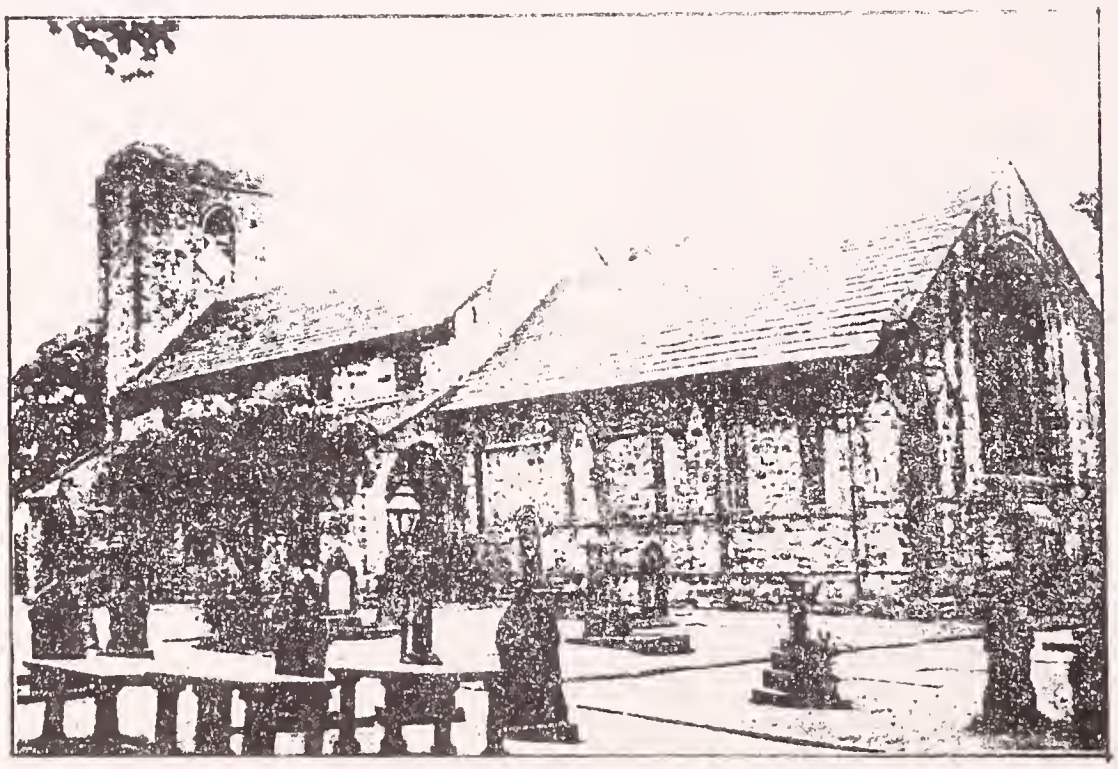
Warrington Church

All sources seem to agree that the emigrating Thomas and John were baptized on September 20, 1601 at the Church in Warrington, pictured here.

WARRINGTON CHURCH LANCASHIRE

Whalley Church

This is a picture of the parish church in Whalley, where some of the Wiswell records were found.



CHURCH OF SAINT MARY & ALL SAINTS
WHALLEY, LANCASHIRE

The Wiswells In England

An Eleven Generation Coincidence

As this is written, two of Elder Thomas Wiswell's ggg ggg gggranddaughters, Doris Wiswell Jones and Katherine Wiswell Wiser, and their husbands, are members of the First United Methodist Church in Lakeland, Florida. For years this church has sponsored a bell ringing and singing group which tours foreign lands each summer. There are a few older persons in the group, but most of them are young adults or teen agers. Each year the membership changes a little, with new additions and some leaving to attend college or because of families moving.

The ringers and singers are superbly trained by Dan and Jan Hermany, the Director and Assistant Director of the church choir.

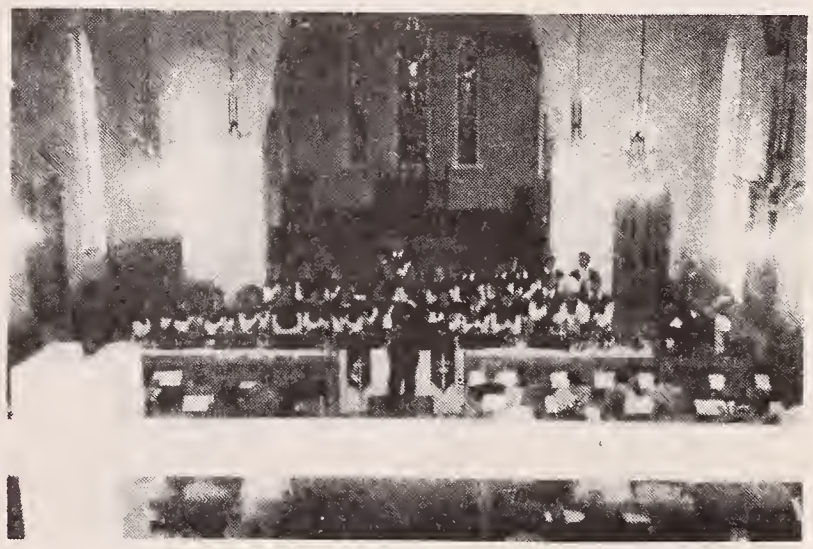
The 1992 European tour of this group included a stop at Warrington, Lancashire, England and a concert at Christ Church in that town. This is the church in which Thomas and John Wiswell were baptized in 1601.

At the right is a picture of the musical group performing at Warrington Church, Summer, 1992.

Mr. and Mrs. Hermany advised the minister of this 391 year coincidence.

The Hermanys reported that the exterior of the church looks pretty much as it did in the picture on the previous page.

It is evident that the church interior has been renovated several times in that long period.



Christ Church, Warrington

Lancashire Wiswells

The Wiswell Line In England According to (JBT)

The information provided by (JBT) is meager and vague, but it is especially interesting since it conflicts in some aspects with other versions of Wiswell lineage in Lancashire.

I'll set down the facts (?) as I interpret them, but I'll spare you explanations of my logic. When necessary, I supply the guesswork. Frankly, I spent so much time on this stuff, I couldn't bear to exclude it. I was also embittered by having to purchase a 554-page book for the opportunity to peruse ten pages of it. I boiled this down to its very bones.

John Wiswell

John Wiswell was born about 1545 and lived in Winwick Parish when his children were born. They were all baptized there. John died about 1608.

Thomas Wiswell

Thomas was John's oldest child, baptized on November 15, 1565. He lived in Ormskirk and married Alice Pickett there on October 20, 1592. Alice died in April, 1618, Thomas in April, 1619. Their marriage was without issue. Before he married, Thomas had an illigitimate child, Edward, whom he acknowledged. Edward was baptized March 7, 1588/89 at Ormskirk. He died young.

Rauffe Wiswell (Raphe, Ralph)

Rauffe was John's second child, baptized April 14, 1569. He became a locksmith, was married and lived in Haydock. He had at least two sons, whose birthdates are not known:

John, baptized September 20, 1601 in Warrington.
Thomas, baptized September 20, 1601 in Warrington.

These are the two who emigrated to America in 1635. There is no indication in the record that they were twins, although some have inferred that from their identical baptismal dates. Rauffe probably had other children but none is specifically named in (JBT).

John Wiswell's Other Children

John, the grandfather, also had Jane (baptized in 1577), Anne (unmarried in 1632), James, who lived in Childwall in Liverpool, (died 1603), Elizabeth (baptized 1579/80), John (baptized in 1582/83) and at least one other.

Confusion in Antiquity

(JBT) spells the name of Thomas who went to America with an 'e', but in quoting from his will, it is spelled Wiswall. The will of James Wiswell, a younger brother of Rauffe, spells his own name with an 'e' and that of his brother with an 'a.'

Rauffe's will spells his name and that of his sister with an 'a.'

How much of this confusion arose from poor handwriting and tentative reading of it?

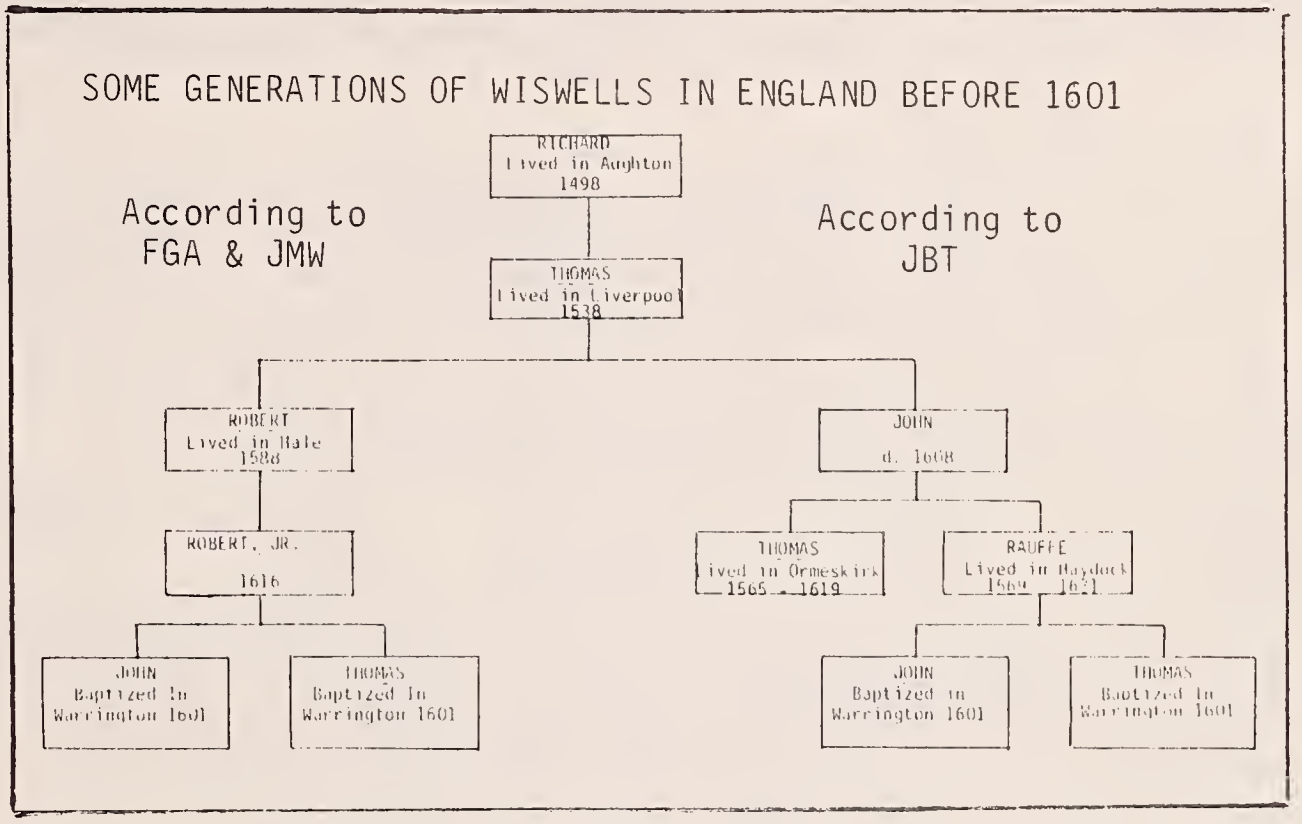
The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Lancashire Wiswells

Differences in Descent

According to (FGA) and (JMW) the two brothers who emigrated to America in 1635 descended form Richard, through Thomas, Robert and Robert, Jr. (JBT) however claims they descended through Richard, Thomas, John and Rauffe (Ralph).

These differences are demonstrated on the following chart. Your compiler does not take a position here.



To all practical purposes, I suppose, it makes very little difference which claim is correct. I encountered the (JBT) version late and felt obligated to present it. This is a free country! Take your pick!

Are you sure you chose the right one?

What's In A Name - A Realistic Compromise

Compiler's Interlude

A personal note - Warrington on the northern bank of the Mersey River, which separates Cheshire and Lancashire, is about 18 miles west of Stockport on the southern bank in Cheshire. The writer's maternal great-grandparents, Benjamin Fiddler and Maria Fosbrook Fiddler, came from Stockport to America in 1864. It is our guess that Fiddlers had lived there for many generations.

One reference states that John and Thomas Wiswell, the emigrants to America, were from Southfould, Lancashire. I cannot find such a place on any map to which I have access.

Early American Spellings

We must concede, I think, that the first two Wiswells in America were, in fact, Wiswalls. John's presence in Dorchester and Boston and Thomas's presence in Dorchester, Cambridge and Newton are authenticated by correspondence and documents originated by them. These papers carry signatures with the "a" spelling. Now the record-keepers in Newton enter the picture. It may be difficult to imagine, but in the Vital Records of Newton, Massachusetts 1691-1850 recording births, deaths and marriages, the names of Thomas's progeny are spelled, variously and hap-hazardly:

Wisell	Wizell	Wiswell	Wisswald	Wiswall
Wizel	Wiswel	Wisewall	Wiswald	

The compilers of Newton, Massachusetts 1679-1779 - A Biographical Dictionary listed the names of Thomas's descendants as Wiswall, uniformly. They used the Vital Records mentioned above and were probably amazed and confounded to find the spelling variations. They made a sensible decision and listed them all as Wiswalls, thus preserving their own sanity and that of their readers.

The name of Thomas's brother John Wiswall is so engraved on his tombstone in a Boston cemetery.

Except for a brief fling a little later on, the writer here abandons all hope of proving the "a" or the "e" spelling. There are Wiswells and Wiswalls. So be it.

I'm sure that Eben encountered these spelling differences in his research for FGA and was frustrated by them. He must have felt that lengthy explanations, factual or hypothetical, had no place in what he was trying to do. Very sensibly, he elected to start and continue with the name spelled as he had always known it to be. Other tracers of the same family whose work I have consulted probably made the same decision, except for the contrary vowels.

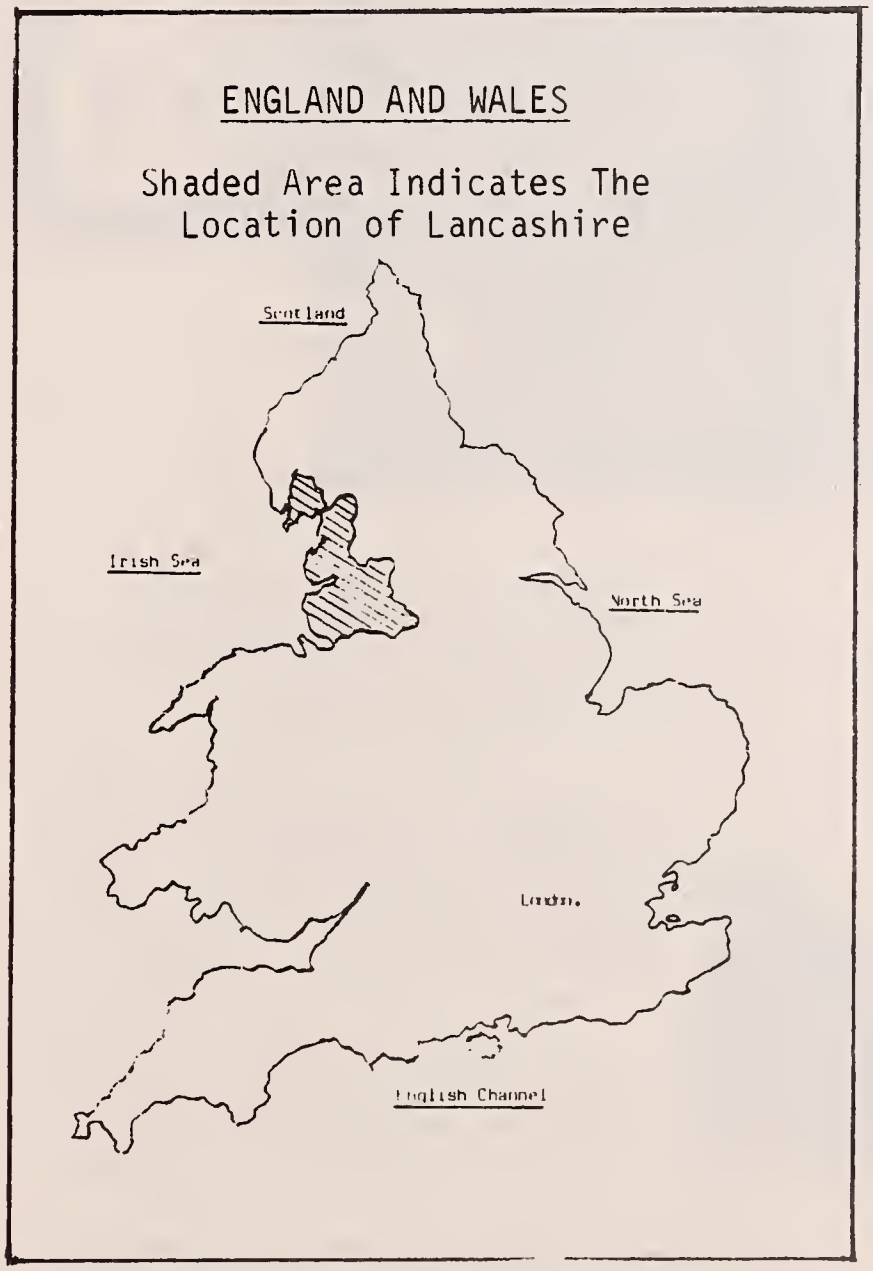
Certainly a present day Wiswall would feel odd in reading in FGA of his Wiswell ancestors of whom he thought he had none. Joseph Wiswall in his work, calls Eben, his ancestors and descendants Wiswall, with which Eben and others are understandably ill at ease. There is disagreement, but it is amiable, accepted with genealogical skepticism and hard-headed maintenance of positions. Genealogists are normally self-forgiving and must, perforce, forgive others.

What's In A Name - A Realistic Compromise

Wiswell As Surname

Earlier I mentioned that families in old England tended to adopt place names as their own surnames, especially if they had lived a long time in one place. For example, a Thomas whose family had lived in Wiswell for generations with no conception of a surname, called himself Thomas of Wiswell to distinguish himself from Thomas of Whalley, an ugly old grouch who lived down the road a piece. One day, suffering from a bad cold, the first Thomas swallowed the "of" when introducing himself and, voila, he was Thomas Wiswell. Now Thomas of Whalley, when he heard of this arrogance, firmly believing that what was good enough for Wiswell was just barely good enough for him, became Thomas Whalley from then on, and so on.

Certainly Wiswells lived in Wiswell Township at one time and perhaps still do, but persons in our subject line (no matter how they spelled it) lived in other parts of Lancashire. We know of Aughton, Liverpool, Hale, Warrington, Winwick, Haydock, Ormskirk and Childhall, a section of Liverpool. The position of Lancashire in England and of these places in Lancashire are shown on the following maps.

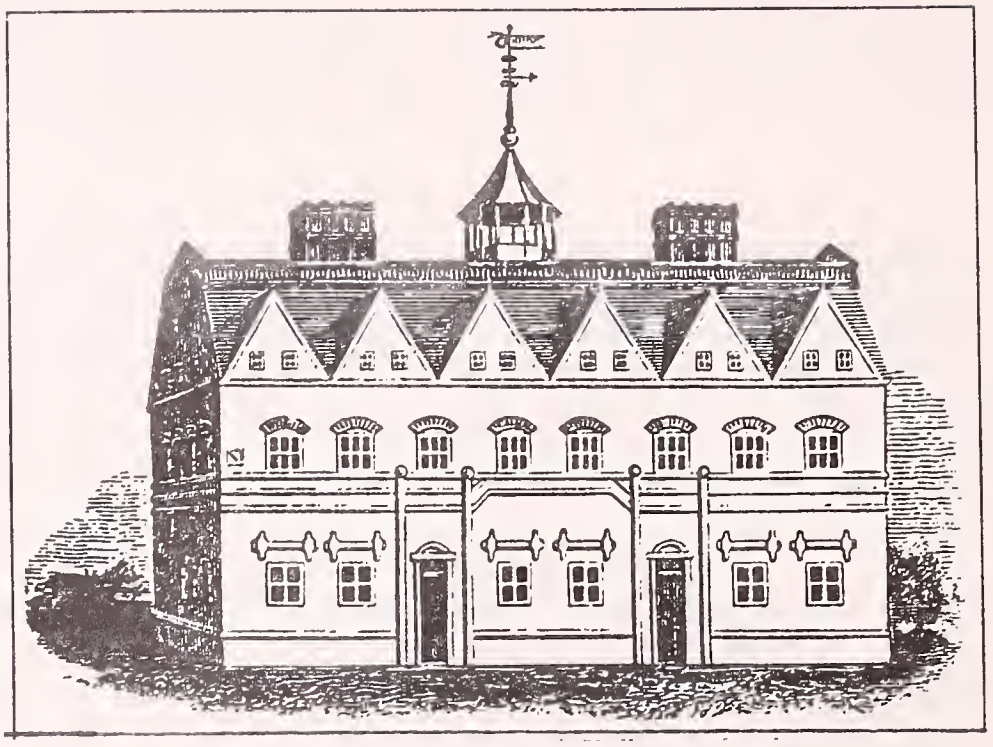


The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Newtown, Cambridge, Cambridge Village, New Cambridge, Newtown, Newton

A Town In Search Of A Name

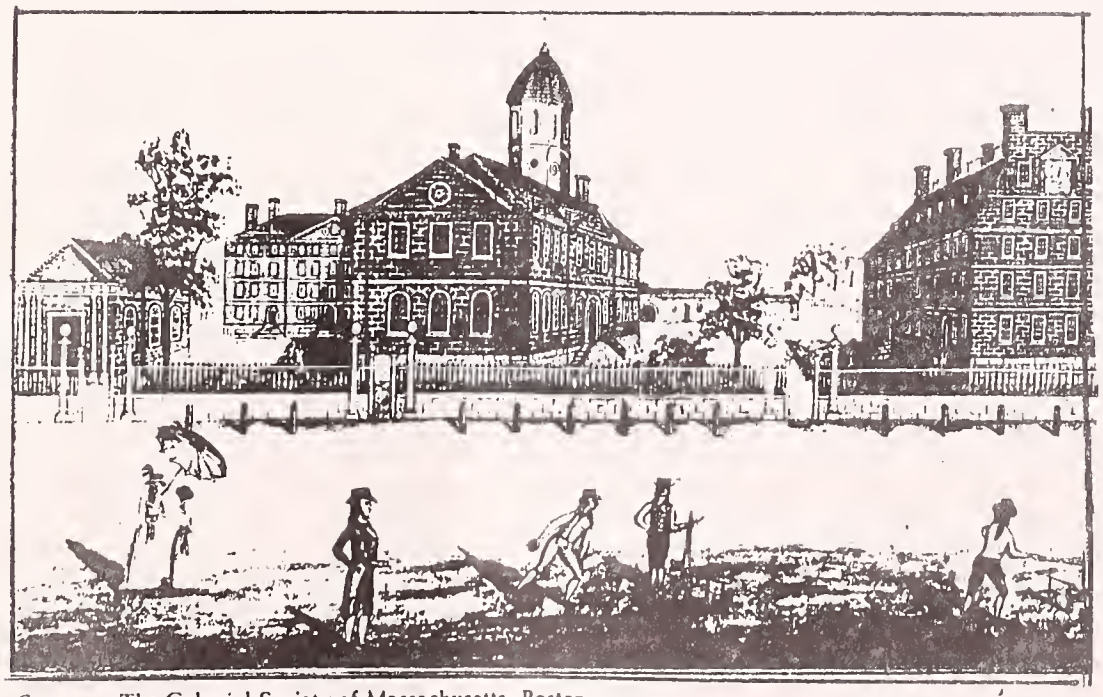
Cambridge, Massachusetts was first settled on a tract of 1000 acres in 1631 and was named Newtown [Newtowne] [New Towne]. In 1634 its environs were expanded by the addition of large land grants south of the Charles River. The new section, oddly enough, was known as "the south side of Charles River."



An Early Harvard Dormitory

Harvard College was established on the on the original tract in Newtown in 1638 and in the same year the name of the community was changed, by order of the court, to Cambridge. This was done in honor of the English University, at which many New Englanders had matriculated or taken degrees.

At the time, in Massachusetts, political systems were influenced to a large extent by religious organization and tenets, in a manner that would be intolerable and unconstitutional under today's separation of church and state. Religious services were first conducted regularly on "the south side of Charles River" in 1654. In that same year Thomas Wiswell arrived from Dorchester and acquired land in that "south side" area, which was then known as Cambridge Village. In 1679 a movement was begun to organize Cambridge Village as a politically independent town. Thomas Wiswell and his sons were strong backers of this movement. The separation of the two communities on January 11, 1688, wiped the slate clean of back taxes "from the beginning of the world." Cambridge was frustrated in having to buy back the rights of free passage over the roadway to Upper Falls, The battle of responsibility of upkeep and maintenance of Great Bridge (over the Charles) lasted nearly a century.



Courtesy, The Colonial Society of Massachusetts, Boston.

View of Harvard College. 1795

Noah Wiswell, the son of Elder Thomas, was appointed to a committee to determine the line between the original Cambridge and the new village. This was certainly an indication of his reputation as an honest and fair man, but left him vulnerable to criticism no matter how he decided moot situations.

For a time the newly organized area was known as New Cambridge. but in 1691, again demonstrating

A Town In Search Of a Name, continued

a pronounced lack of imagination, the General Court ordered that thenceforward it be called Newtown. Newtown it remained until 1766 when a town clerk began to spell it Newton. This is the sound of the name as it had been pronounced since its resurrection in 1691. Newton it had been, Newton it became and Newton it remains. A fig for your thoughts!

Henceforth, any reference to "Newton" will designate the original "south side of the Charles River" or its occupants, even if the events described occurred, or the people named existed anytime from 1634 to the present.

NEWTON MEADOWS

This peaceful scene was taken early in the present century. I doubt that anything like this could be found now. People have filled all the space. The present population of Newton is about 100,000.

Thomas Wiswell, Elder, (1601-1683), was the 15 th settler in Cambridge. He was one of the leaders who first worked (agitated) for a separate church in the further precincts of "the south side of the Charles River." He remained in character and was among those who labored avidly for the political separation of Cambridge Village into New Cambridge, Newtown, Newton.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Elder Thomas Wiswell and Wiswell Pond

Property In Dorchester

Thomas Wiswell acquired several parcels of land in Dorchester while he lived there. When he left in 1654 he disposed of all of them except the family homestead where his son Enoch continued to live. In 1657, when Enoch married Elizabeth Newgate Jackson, a widow, his parents deeded that homestead to him. The covering Transfer of Title of Dorchester Property is a public record.

Enoch was two years old when his family came from England. He lived in Dorchester until he died and is buried there.

Settling In Cambridge (Newton)

The point where Thomas Wiswell settled in Cambridge (Newton) is about eleven miles north of Dorchester. Thomas came there in 1654, evidently because larger areas of land were available and the price was probably more attractive than in the older towns.

FGA and Jackson's History of Newton both state that Thomas's farm was of 400 acres, including 33½ acres of Wiswell Pond. Smith's History of Newton, however, tells us that Thomas's new homestead consisted of about 300 acres including the pond. No record of a deed to the property has been found.

During and after the separation of Newton from Cambridge, Thomas gave the village certain pieces of his property for a church, a parade center, roads and community improvements. He died intestate and the inventory of his estate lists 207 acres of land, £340 and 4 bibles. Over the succeeding years the original tract was broken up by inheritance and by sales.

A NEWTON OCTOBER

This view of Newton in the early 20th century indicates the still pastoral nature of the countryside. At the present day, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to find such a scene.

Plan of the town OF NEWTON IN 1700.

Scale 100 Rods to an Inch.

EXPLANATION

Dwelling Houses built from 1639 to 1700.....▪
do do ▪ ▪ 1700 ▪ 1750.....▫
Roads laid out from 1639 ▪ 1700.
do do do 1700 ▪ 1750.
Town line

NEEDHAM
DEDHAM
ROXBURY
BROOKLINE
WESTON
WALTHAM
WATERTOWN
CAMBRIDGE
LITTLE CAMBRIDGE
Charles River
Gov. Haynes 1031 a. 1631.
1658 John Kenrick 250 a
Cap.t Isaac Williams 500 a 1659
John Fuller 750 a 1658
Richard Park 1650 600 Acres
Robinson Farm about 300 a.
Brook Farm
Bald Pate Hill
Bald Pate Meadow
The Great Meadows
Dedham Road
Sherburne Road
Upper Falls
Lower Falls
Pond Brook
Tower Brook
Landing Road
Powder Horn Lane
Weir Lands
Gov Island
Island
Ministerial Wood Lot
Baptist Burial Ground
Cambridge Hill
Tho.s Hammond 1650
Tho.s Hammond 1650
1650 John Parker Sen.r
Tho.s Hammond 1650
Jno Hammond 1746
Bot.h of
Jared Eliot & Co 870
Enock Hammond
Jno Warren
Edw.d Wilkins
Dan.l Hammond 1751
Sold to Jno Hammond 1746 by Gov.r Court ordered that all Swamps above 100 Acres were to be common & out 350 Acres
Hancock Swamp
Sherburne Road
Landing Road
Powder Horn Lane
Tower Hill
Tower Brook
Pond Brook
Bald Pate Hill
Bald Pate Meadow
Cambridge Hill
Brook Farm
Gov Island
Island
Ministerial Wood Lot
Baptist Burial Ground
Weir Lands
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Robinson Farm about 300 a.
Cap.t Isaac Williams 500 a 1659
John Fuller 750 a 1658
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Wiswell House and Wiswell Pond

The large house which Thomas built in 1654 on the south bank of the pond was grand enough to be called a 'mansion' and was described as - lower lodging room - chamber over - fire room - chamber over - and the cellar. Elevated, it had a fine view of the pond and forest. Rebuilt in 1729, it was expanded in 1744 by Thomas's great-grandson Noah. It did not remain in the family.

After Thomas died in 1683, Wiswell's Pond was sometimes referred to as Noah Wiswell's Pond, but it retained its original name for 200 years. Now, as FGA points out, it is Crystal Lake, part of the city's water system.

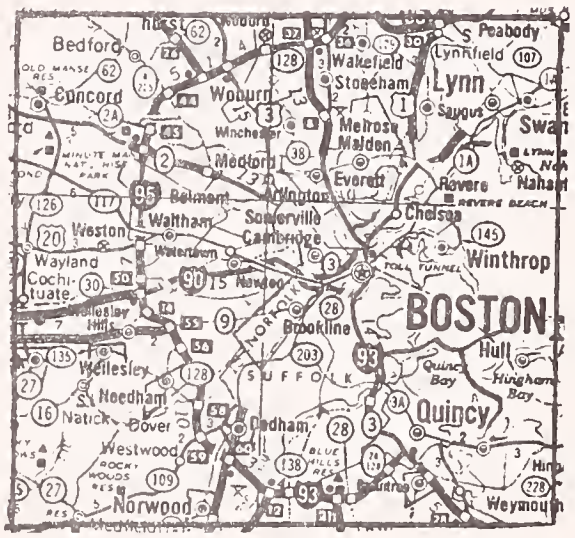
Attached is a map of Newton as it was in 1700. It is obvious that notations were made since that date, some of them dates before 1700, some since. The locations of the Wiswell properties and the pond are shown quite clearly. You will note that the maker of the map and later annotators all used the Wiswall spelling. Let's not go into that again.

This map has another unique feature in that its top points south and southeast. North runs off the page at the lower right. I know little about cartography but I would call this upside-down. The lettering (original and added) conforms to the topsy-turvy mode. Modern eyes will need a moment of concentration to place themselves.

On the left below is an outline map of the present municipality of Newton, on a scale of 2½ miles to the inch. About 100,000 people live there now.

The other map is a current layout of the Boston metropolitan area, on a scale of 12 miles to the inch, showing the relative positions of Newton and the other communities.

North is straight up on these maps!



The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Oh! That Mrs. Wiswell!

The Second Wife of Elder Thomas Wiswell

FGA states that Thomas Wiswell (1601-1683) married Elizabeth Berbage in England, probably in 1632, but does not mention a second wife.

Leon O. Wiswell (LOW), in research subsequent to the issue of FGA in 1986, found that Thomas did have a second wife, whom he married about 1670, identified as Mrs. Isabella (Muston) Farmer.

Clarence Augustus Wiswall (CAW), in A Wiswall Line calls Thomas's first wife simply Elizabeth and mentions a second wife, Isabel Barbage of Great Packington, Warwickshire. Later, in the same work, he refers to her as Isabella Farmer, a widow from Ansley, England. This is a small town about 5 miles northeast of Great Packington.

(The parishes of Great Packington and its neighbor Little Packington, are in the Warwickshire archdicese of Coventry. They are about 1¼ miles apart, and had populations of 334 and 150 respectively, in 1831. These places appear on old maps and are listed in older gazetteers but have disappeared from modern versions into the maw of expanding, industrial Birmingham.)

Reverend Anson Titus (AT), in The Wiswall Family In America refers to a second wife as Isabelle, stating that she was the mother of Edward and the widow of John Farmer.

JBT tells us that Thomas married, first, Elizabeth Burbage of Great Packington, Warwickshire and secondly, Isabell (Muston) Farmer, sister of Reverend Thomas Muston of Wykin and Brinklow and the widow of John Farmer of Anseley, England.

Edward Farmer, the son of Isabella and John, is quoted as saying that his mother was Isabel Barbage of Great Packington.

Let's set down these statements so we can compare their content.

Source	Thomas's First Wife	Thomas's Second Wife
FGA	Elizabeth Berbage	None mentioned
LOW	Elizabeth	Isabella (Muston) Farmer
CAW	Elizabeth	Isabel Barbage of Great Packington Isabella Farmer of Ansley, England
E. Farmer		Isabel Barbage of Great Packington
AT	Elizabeth	Isabelle Farmer
JBT	Elizabeth Burbage of Great Packington	Isabelle (Muston) Farmer, the widow of John Farmer of Anseley, Warwickshire. Sister of Rev. Thomas Muston.

Oh! That Mrs. Wiswell!

The Second Wife of Elder Thomas Wiswell, continued

None of these people gives us a complete and correct story of Thomas's marriages. The melange of data shown above presents four spellings of Isabel (Isabell, Isabelle, Isabella), three of Berbage (Barbage, Burbage), two of Ansley (Anseley). Berbage is given as the maiden name of both of Thomas's wives, and they are both indicated as coming from Great Packington.

I can make little out of this. See what you can do.

It's possible to make reasonable assumptions about the Farmers. My theory: Isabelle Muston was born in Great Packington. She married John Farmer of nearby Ansley and they emigrated to Massachusetts, settling in Billerica, near Newton. They had a son, Edward, who became a doctor and lived in Billerica. Sometime before 1670 John Farmer died, and in 1670 his widow married Thomas Wiswell, as his second wife.

No matter what her name or the spelling of it, Thomas's second wife was a very interesting lady. CAW in referring to Thomas's life in Newton as an elder of the church he helped to create, had this to say:

> "And there, doubtless, he had many a bout with his valiant second wife, she that was born Isabel Barbage of Great Packington in Warwickshire and who, after his death, strove against his sons for her dowry. To quiet down the spirited widow, the magnates of the settlement, Prentice, Bond and Trowbridge, assembled in committee, and finally got her under discipline. Prentice, the stern old trooper, compelling her to retract certain rash asservations, and then drily counselling her to set a watch before her mouth and keep the door of her lips."

Jackson, in History of Newton carried a footnote on this subject, evidently derived from the same source as that from which CAW quoted. This is longer and meatier.

> "There was some difference between her and his children in the settlement of the estate, as appears by the Probate records. In answer to the petition of Isabel Wiswall of Camb. Village, relict of Elder Wiswall, the Court appoints Thom. Prentice, Wm. Bond and Lieut. James Trowbridge, a committee to apportion the dowry, as the law directs, and to endeavor a mutual agreement between the children and the widow. Next, the Court appoints Dea. Samuel Hyde, Lieut. John Cutler and Corp'l. Wm. Bond to set out the wid. Isabel's allowance, which was to be paid at Boston or Dedham, as she may prefer; and Edward Farmer of Billerica was appointed her guardian. Dr. Farmer says, 'She was originally Isabel Barbage of Great Packington, County of Warwickshire, a woman of masculine courage and spirit.' She had a controversy with old Captain Prentice, but he, with more regard to justice than gallantry, obliged her to retract some of her asservations and to promise that in the future she would 'set a watch before her mouth and keep the door of her lips.'"

I'd like to think that Edward Farmer is misquoted here. Surely he knew his mother's maiden name. The lady moved back to Billerica, from whence she came. She died there May 21, 1686. History does not reveal if she kept her mouth shut, as the Court advised. Somehow, I think not. She was a feisty lady, who might have been more comfortable in today's more permissive society.

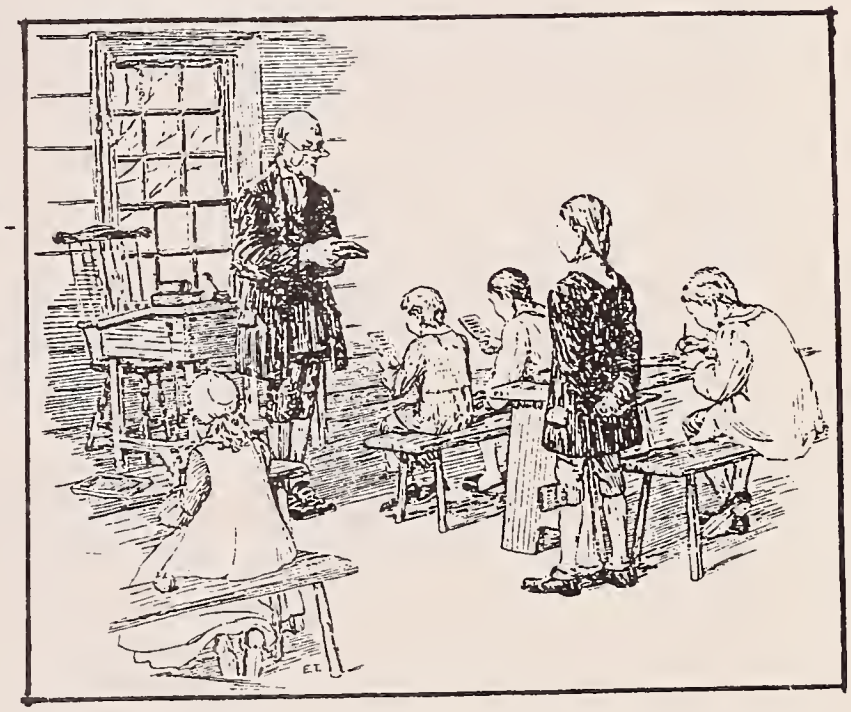
Ichabod Wiswell, Son of Elder Thomas Wiswell

Early Years

Ichabod Wiswell, 1637-1700, born in Dorchester, Massachusetts, was the son of Elder Thomas Wiswell and his wife Elizabeth. He attended Harvard College from 1654 to 1657 but did not receive a degree.

The Town Record of Dorchester, for December 8, 1655, says, in part (retaining the original spelling, grammar, abbreviations and punctuation):

> It is agreed by and between the Selectmen of Dor. in behalf of the Town and Thos. Wiswell and his son Ichabod, as follows:
>
> First that Ichabod with the consent of his father shall from the 7th of March next ensuing unto the end of three full years shall instruct and teach in a free school in Dor. all such children as shall be committed to his care, in English, Latin and Greek as shall be capable. Also to ininstruct in writing such as may be able. It is understood that all such children shall know their letters and be able to spell some. Also that the school house shall be kept in good order and comfortable in summer and winter.
>
> That the Selectmen of Dor. shall pay or cause to be paid unto Ichabod or his Father by his assignment the full sum of twenty-five pounds yearly, two-thirds in wheat, pease or barley, and one third in Indian (corn) at or before the first of March, at price current.



And modern teachers complain of underpayment! Latin? Greek? Forget it. The picture provided here hardly represents Ichabod who was only eighteen at the time. The children's ages might be about right. And the conditions shown were probably typical, except in winter.

Later Years

Ichabod was ordained Pastor of Duxbury Church in 1676. Duxbury was and is a small town on Massachusetts Bay, not far from Plymouth and about 30 miles southeast of Newton. The Alden, Pabodie and Mullins families were prominent and substantial residents of Duxbury.

Ichabod married, first, Remember ------ (No one remembers her surname nor the date of the marriage. Two of the accounts I consulted did't even remember Remember or the marriage either.)

It seems definite, however, that Ichabod married, second, on December 24, 1677. Priscilla Pabodie (Peabody), a granddaughter of Priscilla Mullins of the Mayflower who married John Alden in preference to the shy Captain Miles Standish.

Ichabod Wiswell, Son of Elder Thomas Wiswell

Later Years, continued

Some early accounts spell the given names of both Priscillas as Prescilla, and the maiden name of the grandmother as Mullens. I have more confidence in my spelling.

Ichabod and Priscilla had seven children. He ministered to his flock in Duxbury for 24 years. He died July 12, 1700 and is buried in Duxbury. Newton records indicate that he is buried in grave 432 in Old Burying Ground, Center Street Cemetery, Newton Center. I doubt this. Ichabod lived all of his adult married life in Duxbury and raised his family there. It is likely that his father purchased a family cemetery plot early on, with a grave designated for Ichabod, but not used, and the record, incorrect, shall live forever.

Alden-Mullins Family

John Alden
1599-1687
m. Priscilla Mullins
1601-

Elizabeth Alden
1623-1717
m. William Pabodie
1619-1707

Priscilla Pabodie
1653-1724
m. Ichabod Wiswell
1637-1700

Conflicts

In 1689 Ichabod was appointed an agent for the Plymouth Colony and went to London to obtain a new charter. At the same time, however, Increase Mather, a powerful figure in colonial religious and political affairs, was in England to obtain a new charter for the Massachusetts Colony.

Ichabod directed his efforts toward obtaining a distinct charter for Plymouth and preventing either Massachusetts or New York from combining with Plymouth. Mather sought to prevent a union with New York and to obtain a single charter for Maine, Plymouth and Massachusetts, under the aegis of Massachusetts. Increase was the winner and some bitterness resulted. This may have been further aggravated since Ichabod's Uncle John was Ruling Elder of the First Church in Boston and Increase was the Pastor of the Second church.

Richard Mather
1596-1669

Increase Mather
1639-1723

Cotton Mather
1663-1728

Icabod Wiswell, Son of Elder Thomas Wiswell

Conflicts, continued

Richard Mather came to Dorchester from England in 1635 on the "James" along with John and Thomas Wiswell. He, with his son Increase and grandson Cotton formed a powerful religious dynasty which its enemies referred to as "the unmitred popes of a pope-hating commonwealth."

Increase and Cotton Mather are mentioned elsewhere in these papers, usually in an uncomplimentary way.

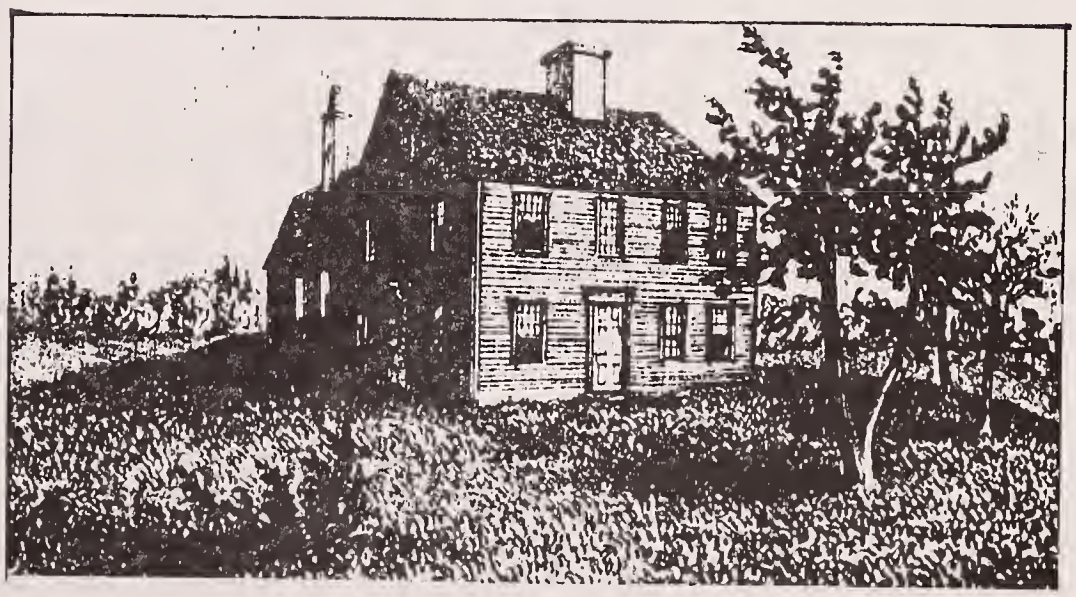
In letters written by Ichabod and Increase to Governor Hinckley of Plymouth Colony, they each maligned the sincerity and abilities of the other. The sarcasm used by each seemed inappropriate for two ministers of the Gospel. I found no other instances of disagreement openly expressed.

Aftermath

While Ichabod did not achieve his purpose in going to England, his efforts were not unrewarded. After his death, his son Peleg petitioned the General Court for a grant of land in consideration of the services his father provided for the colony. The petition was granted and 300 acres of land was assigned to him.

Plymouth never did succeed in separating itself from Massachusetts. Maine was able, after some years, to obtain separation and independence.

Copp's Hill Cemetery
In Boston
Where The Mathers Rest



The John Alden House
In Duxbury, Mass.
c. 1653

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Brother John! Brother John!

What Happened To Thomas's Brother John?

Some sources give September 30, 1601 as the baptismal date of Thomas and John, while September 20, 1601 is favored by others. The simultaneous baptism has lead some to think they were twins. But there are others who say that John is older. "No, no!" say others. "Thomas was the elder." Wouldn't it be nice if everyone could agree about something?

We know Thomas died December 6, 1683 in his 83rd year. John's tombstone gives the date of his death as August 17, 1687 in his 86th year.

From these data I prepared a series of abstruse and perhaps absurd calculations which tend to prove that Thomas was the older.

	John	Thomas
A. Baptismal date	9/20/1601	9/20/1601
B. Date of Death	8/17/1687	12/6/1683
C. Stated or determined to be in this year of life at time of death	86 (1)	83 (2)
D. Earliest date at which (C) would apply	8/18/1686	12/7/1682
E. Earliest possible birth date at which (C) would apply	8/18/1600 (3)	12/7,1599 (3)
F. Latest possible birth date at which (C) would apply	8/19/1601	12/8/1600

1. Stated on tombstone
2. Because of baptism date
3. Assuming normal time of parturition

D = B minus I year less 1 day
E = D minus C
F = E plus one year, not later than 9/20/1601

This is not conclusive but it strongly suggests that Thomas was the older. All readers who have been following this fascinating recital with bated breath may now breathe again.

When the brothers came to America they settled first in Dorchester, Mass. They must have had some capital since they procured Dorchester property almost immediately. They were well educated by standards then current and had been living in a rigorously religious environment.

Reverend Anson Titus tells us that John married, in England, a daughter of Thomas Smith of London and that he probably had a second wife, not named. John had at least 11 children; of these 8 were girls, all but one of whom lived to a marriageable age. There were 3 sons, of whom only John Jr. lived to manhood.

John Jr. was a mariner, twice married, 'a well known and wealthy citizen.' He had 2 sons; only John 3rd survived. John 3rd was born March 21, 1667 and was 'a man with somewhat objurative tendencies.' In other words, he didn't get along with anyone. He married but had no issue of record. The original John's male line died with him, about 1700.

The Further Adventures of Brother John

The headstone of John Wiswall, the first, in Old Granary Burying Ground next to Park Street Church, Boston, carried this inscription:

> Here lyeth ye body of John Wiswall, servant of Jesus Christ, Elder of the First Church of Boston, aged 86 years. Departed this life the 17th day of August, Anno Domino 1687.

The New England Historical and Genealogical Register XV gives some space to the will of a Martha Emons, of Boston, a widow, reading in part:

> I entreat my loving friends, Mr. John Wiswell and Mr. William English to be overseers of the executors of my will, my sons Samuel and Obediah, for which I bequeath each of them 40 shillings.

This refers to Brother John, regardless of the spelling. It probably happened in 1665; he would have been 64 (?) and a recently appointed elder of the lady's church.

I have found no record of a relationship of consequence between the brothers after Thomas left Dorchester in 1654.

The Society of Colonial Wars Index of Ancestors and Honor Roll - 1922 lists Elder John Wiswall as performing service in 1676 during King Philip's War.

Nicholas Upshall, from Dorsetshire, was a man of some substance in Boston who ran afoul of religious authorities by befriending Quakers and was finally banished from Boston for that reason. In a rare book Persecutors Maul'd With Their Own Weapons this passage appears. (Original grammar, spelling and punctuation have been retained.)

> Nicholas Upshall, an old Man full of years, seeing their (the authorities of Boston) Cruelty to the harmless Quakers, & that they had condemned some of them to dye, both he and elder Wisewell, or otherwise Deacon Wisewell, Members of the Church in Boston, bore their testimonies in publick against their bretherns horid Cruelty to said Quakers. And the said Upshall declared: That he did look at it as a sad fore-runner of some heavy Judgment to follow upon the Country; Which they took so ill at his hands, that they fined him twenty pounds, & three pound more at another of their Courts, for not coming to their meeting, & would not abate him one Grote, but imprisoned him and then banished him on pain of death, which was done in a time of such extream bitter weather for Frost, Snow and Cold, that had not the Heathen Indians in the wilderness taken some compassion on his misery for the winter season, he in all likli-hood had perished, though he had then in Boston a good Estate in houses and lands, Goods and Money, as also a wife & Children, but not suffered to come unto him, nor he to them.

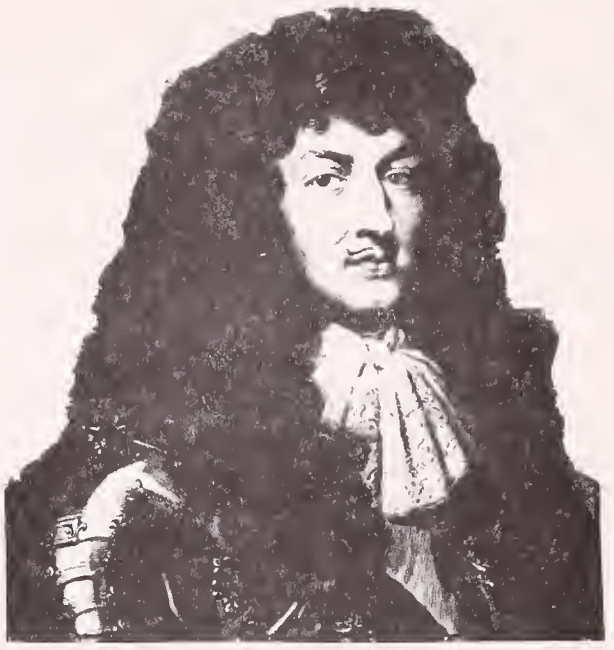
John kept good company. We know nothing of what punishment was meted out to him, if any. There were some pretty cruddy people in Boston in those days.

Elsewhere we make some mention of John in connection with the Mather family, but that's all for him.

Seventeenth Century Colonial Wars

The Ingersolls and Wiswells Get Involved

Louis XIV, in 1689, reappointed as Governor of Canada, Louis de Buade, Comte de Frontenac, whom he had recalled from that post in 1682. Now he gave him explicit orders to conquer New York for France. At this time the necessity of pacifying the Indians at home greatly reduced the forces available for such an offensive southward. However, he was still able to mount fierce frontier raids against outlying New York and New England settlements.



Louis XIV
1638-1715
At age 32

Since 1675, a favorite target of the French and their Indian allies had been the coast settlement of Casco Bay (later to be known as Falmouth and later still as Portland). Subsequent portions of this chronicle will describe the parts played by Ingersolls and another Wiswell in the fate and fortunes of this Maine community. It is appropriate, however, to mention now that an Ingersoll had been killed in a 1675 raid and family property had been devastated. The Ingersolls departed the area to avoid further depradations but returned soon and assisted in the rebuilding and development of the town. In 1690, hearing of fresh raids, the Ingersoll family again left Casco and Maine. All this is only to suggest the small-world aspects of early America.

A Raid On Casco - Plans To Punish the Invaders

Early in May, 1690, about 500 French soldiers and Indian allies attacked Casco Bay with considerable success. When news of this foray reached the settlements to the south in New Hampshire and Massachusetts, it was already well into June. Militia were mustered and a Newton company under the command of Captain Noah Wiswell set out for the north, as did companies from other towns. The Newton militia arrived at Portsmouth, N.H. on July 4, 1690, joining other forces already assembled. A court was called (perhaps a council-of-war would be more accurate) and it was decided that Noah's company and one other to be chosen by lot would 'scour the woods toward Casco.' The other 'lucky' company under Captain Floyd, twenty-two men from Wells, Me. and the Newton contingent made up the 'scouring' force. They set out from Cocheco River, a tributary of the Piscataqua, a few miles above Portsmouth, in a northwesterly direction.

A curious reader may ask, "Why didn't all of the militia companies go "a-scouring', since they must have known the approximate size of the invading force, and why did they go in a direction that wasn't toward Casco?

The second question can be answered quite easily. The militia people must have had some word of the course the enemy was following, and plotted an intercept. The other question is more difficult. My best guess is that Portsmouth and that area was thought to be vulnerable and required protection.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Seventeenth Century Colonial Wars

Battle Joined

On the morning of July 6, 1690, militia scouts found the trail of the raiders, headed southwest for further pillage. The French and Indians were overtaken at Wheelwright's Pond, on the Lamphrey River near Lee, N.H. A long and bloody engagement followed. The militia were out-manned, out-gunned and over-matched. The enemy was fresh, numerous and well-supplied with Casco booty. (The Canadian force was made up of wily, experienced forest fighters. They may have allowed the militia to chase them into a well-led and well-planned ambush.)

Captain Noah Wiswell, his son John, Lt. Gersham Flagg, Sergeant Edward Walker and fourteen other men were killed. The surviving militia finally retreated under the leadership of Captain Floyd, leaving the bodies of their dead comrades to the mercies of the enemy or the denizens of the forest. The enemy's casualties are not known.

The Newton Biograohical Dictionary says of Noah, quoting verbatim, including the failure to capitalize: "slaine in battel by ye Indians and ye french."

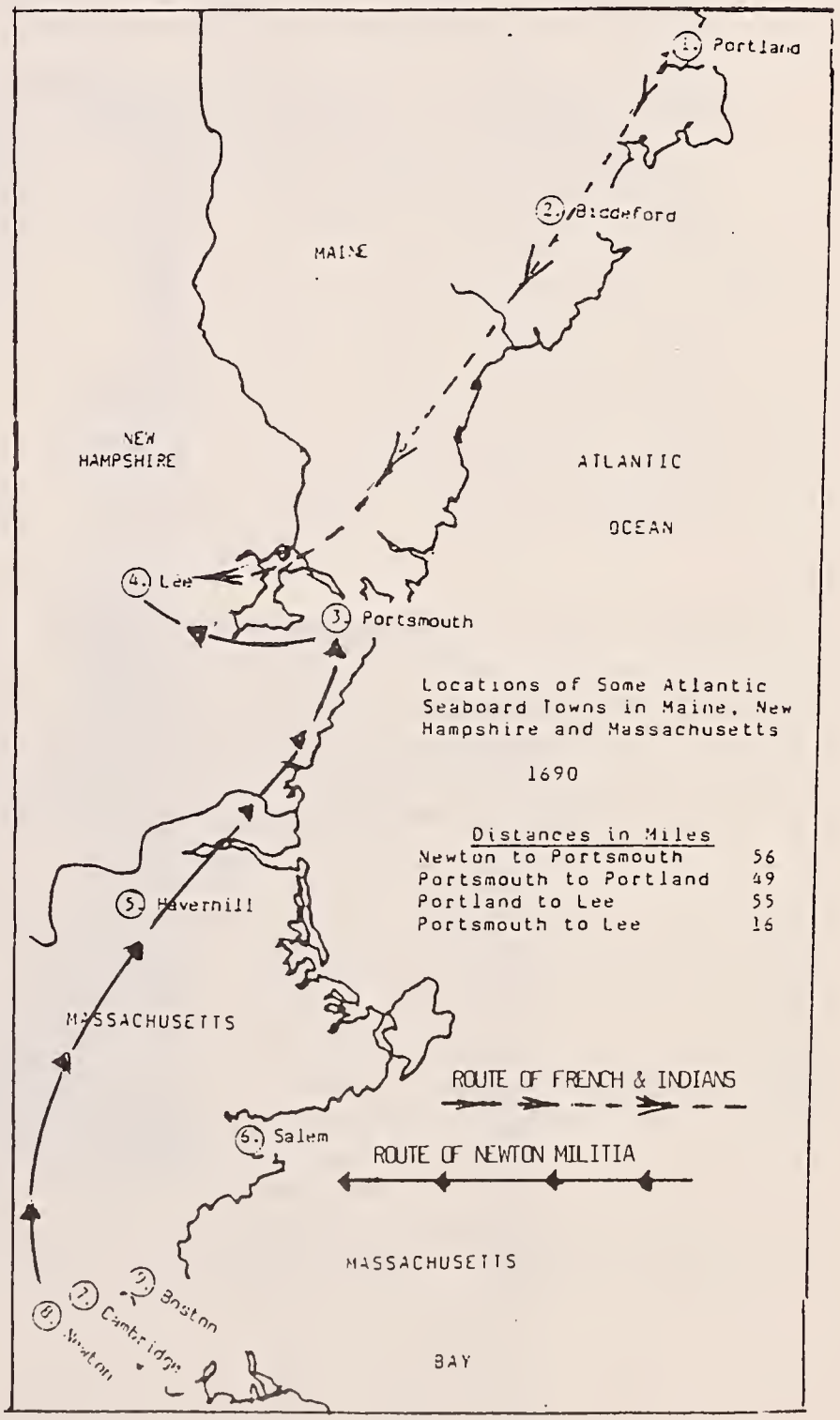
Distances And Destinations

My special gift of hind-sight leads me to think that FGA is inaccurate in stating that Noah's company arrived at Casco on July 4, 1690. Everyone else says that he reached Portsmouth on that date, 49 miles short of Casco.

The map at the right illustrates relative distances between points involved in the story.

Militia traveled on foot or possibly some distance by canoe or raft. Each man carried a musket, knife, powder horn, musket balls, spare flints, perhaps a bullet mold, food, blankets, dry stockings (this was long before the day of socks).

If the Newton men arrived in Casco on July 4 after a trip of 105 rough, up, down and around and sideways miles, they could not have undertaken another long hike to Lee and arrive on July 6 ready to fight. They would have been too pooped to participate, which might have been a good thing.



Seventeenth Century Colonial Wars

Post Mortem

Accounts of the battle at Wheelwright's Pond differ as to whether or not a twenty-year old son of Noah did accompany his father on that fatal journey and was killed on that bloody ground.

Francis Jackson's History of Newton, in a listing of Noah's children, included a John with no birth date and a question mark. Was Jackson uncertain about John's existence or was he only noting the absence of a birth date? Jackson's story of the battle says, "There is a tradition that Noah had a son John, who belonged to his company and fell with him in that action."

This tradition also appears in Niles' History of the Indian Wars which was published in 1746. This may well be the source of Jackson's declaration. Newton Biographical Dictionary takes note of Noah's death but makes no mention of John. FGA treats John's existence, participation and death as factual and shows a birth date of 1670 for him. The Vital Records of Newton shows the birth of a son John to Noah and Theodocia Wiswell, but does not provide a date. The birth dates of Noah's other children, as recorded, do not preclude the possibility of a birth in 1670. Ill equipped as I am to pontificate, but ever-willing to do so, I tend toward FGA's treatment of John as a real live person and later a real person dead.

FRONTENAC RETURNS TO CANADA, 1689

COUNT FRONTENAC had been Governor of Canada from 1672 to 1682 and had ruled it with an iron hand, though likewise with a sympathetic heart. His quarrels with the Bishop and Intendant had caused his recall. But now that Canada was in such peril from both Iroquois and whites (for King William's War was just beginning) Louis XIV sent him back. Few figures in the New World are so striking as that of this seventeenth-century nobleman, who had devoted his whole life to the service of the French court and took his keenest delight in the appreciation his guests expressed for his horses, his estates, his wine, and himself. None the less, under the habiliments of the courtier, there beat the heart of an implacable and relentless soldier, whose imperious mien and quick temper was admirably suited to dealing with North American Indians. Frontenac, though now in his seventieth year, could seize the tomahawk with as wild a yell as any Iroquois ever uttered, and lead a war dance with complete abandon. Quebec hailed his return with rapture.

62 From the painting by C. W. Jefferys in possession of the

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

The British Soldier - 1775

Introduction

The omniscient author here pauses to discuss things not previously known to him which may be news to the reader too. The subjects are relevant and speaking of them may provide a better understanding of the ordinary men who fought each other bitterly in the dirty nitty-gritty of the first battle of the American Revolution.

Recruitment

How did the British infantryman get that way? He was probably a young lad, poor, uneducated, hungry, unemployed, enamored of the scarlet coat, ripe for the picking by a recruiting sergeant offering a pint of beer. He may have been an older debtor just released from imprisonment or threatened with it, or a criminal swapping his 'enlistment' for a pardon.

> "By lies they lured them, by liquor they tempted them and when they were dead drunk, they forced a shilling into their fists."

Taking the King's shilling was a term for signing-up, a one-time payment.

Here we see a pompous sergeant and his zealous assistant 'enlisting' army recruits in an English town. The grinning idiot at the far right should be extremely careful. They also 'enlisted' mentally retarded specimens. If it breathed, it was physically fit.

'Compulsory enlistment' appears often, an obvious contradiction in terms. 'Impressment' is more accurate, but whatever it was it was legal. An Act Against Vagabonds authorized recruiters to take:

> "...any sturdy beggar, any fortune teller, any idle, unknown suspected fellow ... that cannot give an account of himself ...any one who has been in gaol or is known as an incorrigible rogue."

Neither of these types of recruitment could fill the ranks and the British government was forced, soon after Concord-Lexington, to hire foreign mercenaries, another form of military bondage.

The British Soldier - 1775

Recruitment, continued

Traditional regiments with historical reputations, such as the Black Watch and the Coldstream Guards, did not have to rely on this kind of recruitment but attracted, as volunteers, young men full of patriotism, eager for fame, glory and adventure. This was not the case of the regiments in the Boston garrison of 1775.

Pay and Diet

The British private soldier in 1775 earned 8 pence per day. Out of this he had to pay for his clothing, medicine, food, repair of weapons and other expenses. As a result net pay was often nothing or less, with the soldier owing his colonel for the privilege of risking his health and even his life in the service of the King.

A contemporary source had this to say about the pay of a British private:

> "When deductions are made for cloathing (sic), necessaries, for washing, for the paymaster, for the surgeon, for the multiplied articles of useless and unmilitary fopperies (introduced by many colonels to the oppression of the soldiers for what they called the credit and appearance of the regiment) there is not enough overplus for healthful subsistence; and as to the little enjoyments and recreations, which even the meanest of souls call their own in any country, this the brave, the honorable, the veteran soldier must not aspire to."

As to the food, the rank and file were at the mercy of commissary officers and sergeants who skimmed the mess or ration funds with a deep and sticky dipper. Food was uniformly poor in quality, unappetizing and never plentiful.

Morale

Regardless of background, low pay and lousy food, the British common soldier responded well to monotonous drill, harsh training and iron discipline. Individually and as a group they developed some personal dehumanization but also high 'esprit d'corps.' They displayed hardihood, stubborn courage, even gallantry, persistence and military effectiveness, sometimes under questionable leadership. Generally, as in most armies, the veteran, tough non-commissioned officers held the whole shebang together.

Army Organization

A regiment had ten companies of about 47 men each, if at full strength, which was not often the case. 61% of effective strength was the average in the Boston regiments. Of these companies, eight were designated as 'line' or 'battalion.' Each regiment had two flank companies, specially trained, drilled and equipped. A grenadier company was made up of tall, powerful, active men. The other flank company was light infantry, whose members were chosen for above-average intelligence, agility and swiftness of foot.

In the field these grenadier and light-infantry companies were detached from their parent units and merged into a separate corps of shock troops, a 'corps d'elite.'

The British Soldier - 1775

Army Organization, continued

Regiments might be designated as fusiliers, a carry-over title. A 'fusil' is an old term for a flint-lock musket. In the distant days when there were regiments of archers and of pikemen, the term fusiliers was used to denote a regiment equipped with those new-fangled bang-sticks, the fusils. The designation persists, although equipment is standard for all infantry regiments.

In the 1600's special troops were trained to precede the main body of attackers, throwing small bombs or grenades to clear a path for the remaining force. Larger, more powerful men were selected for this duty on the assumption that size and strength would enable them to throw for greater distances. (Accuracy is not mentioned.) The bomb-throwers were called grenadiers. Grenade throwing had long been abandoned in 1775, but the name was retained for companies of men with the qualifications of grenadiers. (Of course grenades became important weapons of most infantry in World Wars I and II and most other conflicts since.)

Private, Royal Welsh Fusiliers

Grenadier Private 29th Regiment

Corporal, 14th Regiment Line Company

Uniforms and Headgear

Uniforms were gaudy in color and contrasts, more acceptable for parade than for real soldiering. They made excellent targets for the enemy. They were tight at waist, crotch and knee, uncomfortable, hindering movement. High collars and leather stocks were very stiff, making head movements slow,awkward and chafing. Each trooper was expected to keep his uniform immaculate. He might smell bad but his uniform had to look clean. Who knows, he might have to parade before someone important tomorrow. In all the stuff I read, I found no mention of bathing facilities or other hygienic impedimenta.

The British Soldier - 1775

Uniforms and Headgear, continued

The cocked hat was the usual headgear for line companies, a low-browed tricorne, apt to blow off in a stiff wind. Grenadiers wore caps or helmets of bearskin, with a brass or steel front plate. Light infantrymen wore leather skull-caps with a metal plate, not as high as the grenadiers' caps. Fusiliers wore a tapered leather cap. None of these headgear provided a brim or visor for shading the eyes, nor any protection from enemy action, except that a metal plate might deflect an almost spent musket ball or lessen the effect of a blow from a musket butt.

Leadership

Royal regiments were raised by order of the King, others by specified men at the King's command. Such a specified person could make a good thing out of a regiment without ever bearing arms himself, delegating responsibility to others.

In raising a regiment, the Colonel was paid so much per man enlisted and afterwards an annual amount for soldiers' pay and clothes. (See above.) In some instances the Colonel was not paid for enlistment but was allowed to sell commissions to officers he nominated. A commission so purchased became the property of the holder and entitled him to appropriate pay for the rest of his life - or half-pay if the regiment were to be dis-established in time of peace.

This British officer probably was given his commission because of wealth or social position; or his father may have purchased it to get him out of the house. He would have no formal military training or experience. In some cases he was a menace to the men he commanded, or even to the regimental commander himself. At least some one taught this one to stand straight.

A commission could be sold if the holder wished to withdraw. This was the usual way for someone to get a promotion, by purchasing a higher-ranked commission and then selling the existing commission to another officer down the scale or, for that matter, to a civilian.

A commission was a part of someone's estate and could be sold by heirs to those aspiring to higher rank. This restricted commissions to men or families of means. There were no military schools, except for the artillery branch. Raw boys entered the army at 16 or so with purchased commissions and learned their profession by experience in actual service. There was nothing like a fitness report or promotions for merit or years-in-rank or such foolishness.

It is manifest that the capability and efficiency of a regiment's officers was a matter of luck, good, bad or indifferent.

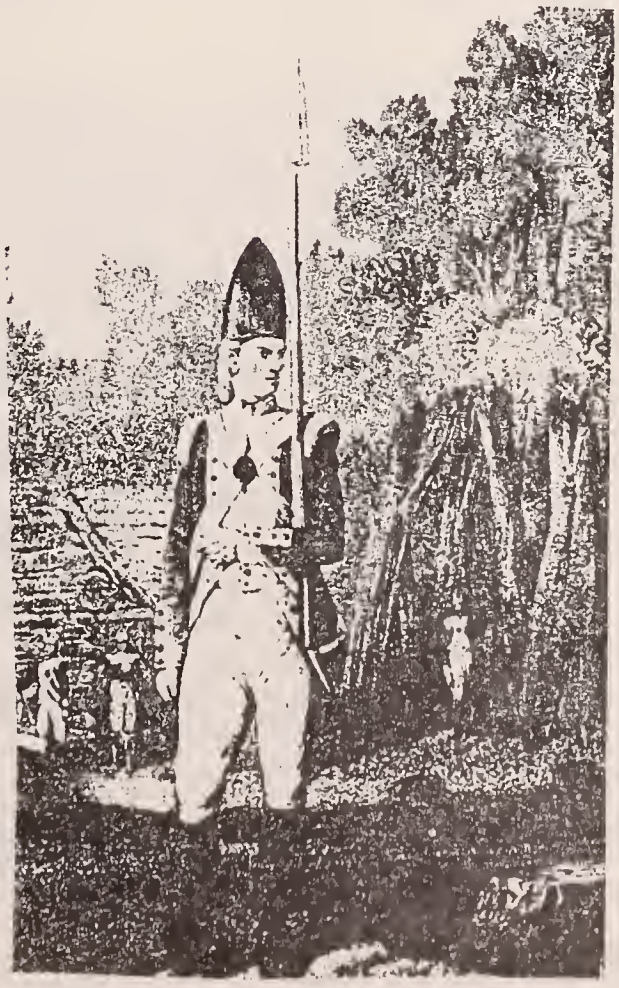
The British Soldier - 1775

Weapons of the British Private

The "Brown Bess" musket of a British infantryman was a flint-lock, smooth-bore gun, weighing ten pounds, 54" long, with provision for attachment of a 21" bayonet. (Some sources say a 17" bayonet.) It had no rear sight. Its caliber was .762 (a little more than 3/4") and its bullet or ball weighed more than an ounce. The musket had a very short range; a ball fired with a regulation charge of powder at shoulder-height would fall harmlessly to the ground at about 125 yards.

The musket was inaccurate, but that didn't matter since its user was not supposed to be a marksman. He had not been trained to aim at a single object or even at the mass of the enemy. He was taught to place the gun on his shoulder, point it horizontally at the enemy and, on command, to pull the trigger and brace for a vicious recoil when the gun went off, if indeed it did go off and did not mis-fire. Reloading the gun was accomplished by eight orders from a sergeant and twelve motions on the part of the infantryman. Volley firing was effective and quick loading was needed. After a volley or two, a bayonet charge, massive, relentless, bloody and brutal was the regiment's fiercest and most feared weapon.

The "Brown Bess"" pictured here is the third model of that weapon, introduced about 1740 and in use during the Revolution. This musket was very much the same as the two earlier models, except for the length of the barrel, some changes in decorative furniture and some improvement of the cocking mechanism. The barrels of the other guns were 46 inches and 42 inches, respectively. The barrel of the third model was about 39 inches.



Compulsory Military Service in Colonial New England

Militiamen

The Indians who first encountered the early New England settlers were sometimes friendly, sometime hostile, but with no guaranty of constancy in their dealing with the white men. Some sort of military system was needed to defend towns, hamlets and farms from attacks by momentarily unfriendly Indians. Authorities decreed that every able-bodied man between the ages of sixteen and sixty was required by law to possess a gun and its proper equipment of ammunition and accesories, and to be enrolled in the militia company of his own township. He was supposed to turn out at intervals, perhaps four times a year, with the rest of his company, for training. Hence the term "train bands."

The efficacy of such training depended upon officers' abilities and the attitude of the trainees. When no Indian raids had been made recently, it is likely that strict attention to things military was not uniformly expected or achieved. The younger the men, the more sky-larking. When Indian raids were nearby and imminent, attitudes and efforts were somewhat more serious.

"Training Days In The Olden Time" is the title of a popular 19th century print of a scene in the 18th, when regular "training days" were provided by colonial law, as preparation for military service. The settlers were averse to spit-and-polish drilling and made a poor appearance in military turn-outs.

The character (mid-picture) in the Miles Standish helmet and breastplate was either the town clown or the village idiot. The horse is is probably tired from plowing earlier in the day, with no enthusiasm for this human nonsense.

Early on the primary purpose of all this was defense against Indians. There was no thought of sending militia outside the province. The outbreak of the French and Indian War necessitated a new system which would provide a force to operate beyond the colony's borders. This plan called for officers appointed by the Governor to recruit volunteers "for His Majesty's service in a regiment of foot."

In 1763 that scheme was abandoned and "His Majesty's" forces became militia once more. There was one important difference, however. Men of the militia selected their own officers rather than having them appointed by the Governor. Regiments and companies were identified by the names of their elected commanders.

In 1774 it was decreed that one third of each militia group, usually made up of the better soldiers, was to be ready "at a minute's notice." This was the origin of the famous term Minuteman. In a lot of historical literature participants in battle have been identified as Minutemen who were not. By and large, Minutemen as a group were in existence only about six months and actually contributed little to New England's military effort. The writer waxes wroth on this subject a little later.

Compusory Military Service in Colonial New England

Militiamen, Continued

There was a third class of militia - alarm companies or "exempts." These were a last resort or ultimate reserve composed of boys, old men, magistrates and clergymen. They were never of consequence as units, but there are stories of individual cases of brave service and even sacrifice.

In April of 1775, just before Lexington-Concord, another modus-operandi was devised. The provincial Congress decided to no longer depend on militia but to enlist 13,600 volunteers for a term of eight months, but providing that militia officers be given preference for commissions in the new army. These were Colony troops, Colony controlled.

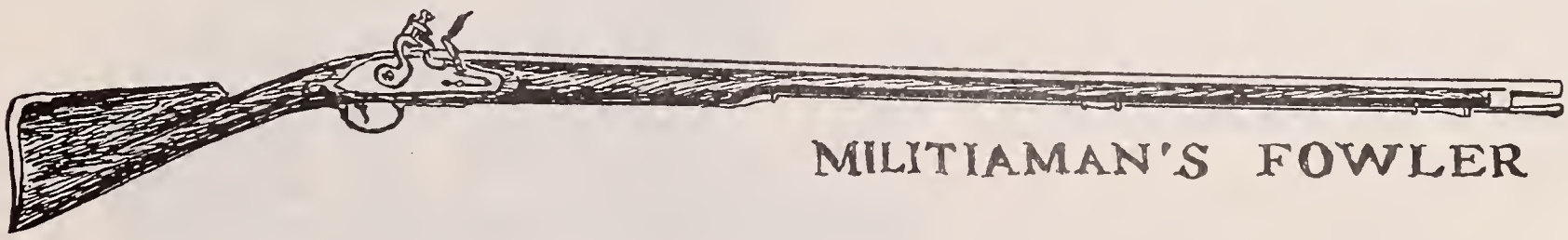
The Continental Army was non-existant in April, 1775 and was another story entirely.

The Militiamen's Weapons

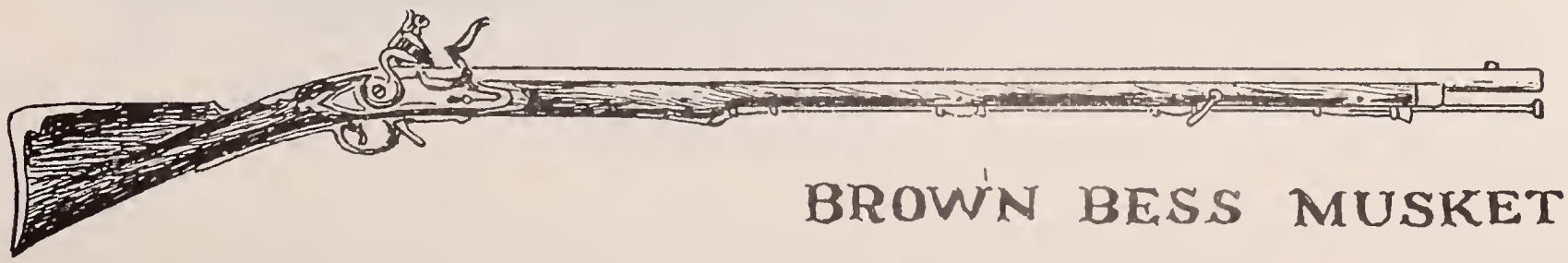
The Massachusetts militiamen were armed with a variety of guns, some of them heirlooms. There were older British style muskets, 30 to 60 years old, muskets of all styles and ages made by colonial gunsmiths, fowling pieces, blunderbusses, any kind of gun that would fire bullets or buckshot, except rifles, which were then unknown in New England.

In practice or drill, preparing for another shot had only one order - reload!- and ten motions were necessry to accomplish that. Most of the time militiamen would be alone in fighting, or with only a few others. No orders were needed to begin loading. It started as soon as the shooter had recovered from the wrenching recoil of the previous shot.

None of these weapons was accurate nor did any of them have a long range.



MILITIAMAN'S FOWLER



BROWN BESS MUSKET

Sons of Liberty?

Sons Of Liberty Organizations

Most American school kids complete their meager reading assignments about the Revolution and come away with a high regard for George Washington, Paul Revere and the Sons of Liberty. To my knowledge no school text or secondary school teacher has tried to disabuse the youngsters' impression of the last of these. Thousands of pages have been written about these groups, some of it repetition, some contradictory and some questionable. I have tried here to reduce this to the essence, without reciting particular instances and without naming names. My version is one-sided. There is only one side.

In the period 1763-1776 the term "Sons of Liberty" was applied rather loosely in many colonies to groups of men who reacted violently and often illegally to any real or imaginary infringement of the rights they imputed to themselves as British subjects. After July 4, 1776, they transferred their allegience but retained the same attitudes and the same unethical methods of forcing change.

Each of these organizations had a three-tier membership which was not so identified but was none the less real. A large part of a community's elite, the influential and wealthier merchants, bankers, proprietors of shipping businesses, politicians and even some clergymen comprised the first or upper tier which effectively controlled the remainder. Tradesmen, bakers, barbers, cordwainers, carpenters, smiths, shipwrights made up the second middle class stratum. Every town had enough ruffians, stevedores, muggers, unemployed or stranded seamen and fugitives to make up a belligerent bully-boy gang, usually eager for trouble and ready to cause it. But these lines were thinly drawn, many of the first two groups participated heartily in the roughest demonstrations. In violence they were one homogenous mob.

In this period the Sons of Liberty denied that liberty to anyone who opposed them. In the course of this denial the following crimes, misdemeanors and/or affronts to decent people, were committed by these upstanding citizens:

- Rioting, looting, flagrant trespass.
- Cruelties, insults and indignities to innocent persons.
- Assault and battery, or the threat thereof.
- Robbery, breaking and entering.
- Cruelty to animals.
- Woeful and unprovoked damage to property.
- Prevention of the exercise of police functions.
- Prevention of the exercise of court function, sometimes by kidnap of magistrates.

Here our friends have tarred and feathered an objector and they are forcing him to drink the King's tea. Note the Boston Tea Party simulation in the back ground.

Sons of Liberty?

Sons of Liberty Organizations, continued

Intimidation of women and children.
Threats of physical violence against family members to coerce officials.
Pursuit, harassment and imprisonment of those accused of Loyalist sympathies, without a hearing.
Mob drunkenness, made possible by forceful confiscation of the contents of private wine cellars.
Hanging and burning, in effigy, any target of the Sons.

Stringing and swinging a victim on a Liberty pole or tree.

Protests

Didn't anyone oppose this? Lots of people did and kept their mouths shut as the better part of valor. Didn't anyone at least find fault with it? Yes, of course, and if he were the publisher of a news sheet and reported the depradations of the Liberty Boys, or even if he mentioned an opinion that was contrary to those of the controllers, he would tomorrow find his windows broken, his press smashed, his fonts of type pied, destroyed or confiscated, a torch applied to the premises.

It has been stated that many of the leaders of the Sons of Liberty groups who protested most vehemently against the Stamp Act, could see that enforcement of such an act would reveal and destroy their own lucrative smuggling activities and their reputations as staunch citizens. There were some big names in this group.

Boston had always been subjected to riots, often under the guise of celebrations, and there were gangs already in existence who would break a few heads for a few beers. These were avidly recruited by the Sons. Boston controllers did not hesitate to use and promote anti-Catholic bigotry to foster their own devious designs. Complaint was dangerous to anyone's health!

Some Contemporary Quotations

These were impressions most citizens of Boston had:

> Do what the mob asks, or the mob will destroy your property and perhaps destroy you as well. To the victim, the threat of physical harm, brutally and unreasonably administered, lay behind the whistles and the shouts and the insults.
>
> Everyone in Boston realized that justice ran only on the paths chosen by the radicals. It is understandable that King George and his ministers, pondering events like these, came to regard Massachusetts as a 'colony in which the exercize of all civil power and authority was suspended by the most daring acts of force and violence.'

Sons of Liberty?

Did the Sons of Liberty Serve a Purpose

It is manifest that the Sons of Liberty, in many instances, destroyed the liberty of others to achieve their own. It is difficult, nay, impossible to defend that position from an ethical or philosophical standpoint. But it got the job done. Without the Sons of Liberty, our country would probably have achieved independence, but not in 1776. It would have taken a lot longer than that but a war would have been avoided.

With regret, I must admit that the Sons of Liberty did serve what an American must call a useful purpose. Their activities and their correspondence among the colonies united the people and prodded them into a joint, successful effort.

Unfortunately Sons of Liberty thinking has not disappeared in more than 200 years. Perhaps it has been tempered somewhat and become more subtle, but it would be foolhardy to suppose it had been completely suppressed. To some extent it is still present in politics, in business, in community affairs. God help us all!

Question: The people in America at the time of the Revolution who did not believe in Revolution or independence made up almost half of the total population. Do you suppose that, if they had united and formed a Sons of Great Britain organization they could have preserved the colonies as territories of the Crown?

Here is another example of Sons of Liberty activity. I don't know who the artist was but he clearly illustrated the intelligence of the perpetrators.

History Lesson Recalled - Lexington and Concord In Brief

Introduction

American eighth graders have been thrilled by an inaccurate and highly romanticized poetic narrative of Paul Revere's ride and by brief, biased history book paragraphs about the Lexington-Concord affair. Our forefathers defied tyranny and won! Sagas of heroes! Hurrah!

In 1987 I had forgotten whatever I knew of these events, but it was just as well because most of what I had learned was erroneous or inconclusive. As you have surmised, I have since read much about those days; I bulge with information. I'd like to share it, hoping that all of us may better understand the actions in which some Wiswells participated (even if as Wiswalls).

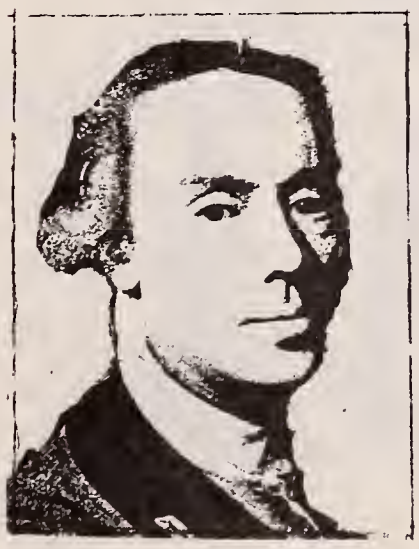
Volumes galore have been written about April 18-19, 1775 in Massachusetts. I read many; some confused me and I was amused by others. It is no surprise that I am somewhat skeptical about historians' conclusions, even when they sometimes agree. This presentation may be no better than theirs, but I prefer it. It has a short preamble and a rather long time-table of events. If you want the story according to Wiser, you'll have to plow through it.

Setting the Stage

In early April, 1775, in Boston, the British authorities were aware of growing tensions between colonials and His Majesty's officials, particularly tax collectors and the army which had billeted the Boston garrison in the warehouses and even in the private homes of unwilling hosts. They knew that, throughout New England, militia companies were drilling seriously and often and accumulating military stores, and that patriot leaders were soon to meet in a Second Continental Congress. To discourage aggressive colonials from taking military action against the Crown, sorties were made to outlying towns, to show muscle and to seize or destroy armaments. Some of these were successful, others not.

Cast of Characters

You can't tell the players without a program. Here are the principals.



Thomas Gage, left, 54, Commander in Chief and Military Governor of George III's forces in the New World, quartered comfortably in Province House, married to a colonial lady, a friend of George Washington, a veteran soldier and administrator, not incompetent, a decent man.

Hugh, Earl Percy, right, Major General, later the second Duke of Cumberland, leader of the British relief column, a respected and skillful officer. He was originally contemptuous of the militia's fighting ability, but he changed his mind after taking some hard licks from them.

History Lesson Recalled - Lexington and Concord In Brief

Cast of Characters, continued

Lt. Colonel Francis Smith, ranking regimental officer of the 10th Lincolnshires, in command of the expedition against Concord, described as indolent, slow-moving, almost too corpulent to sit a saddle, an obstinate dullard. After a poor start, he seemed able enough, certainly not lacking in gut, nor in guts either.

John Pitcairn, Major of the Royal Marines. See Pitcairn and Parker At Lexington Green.

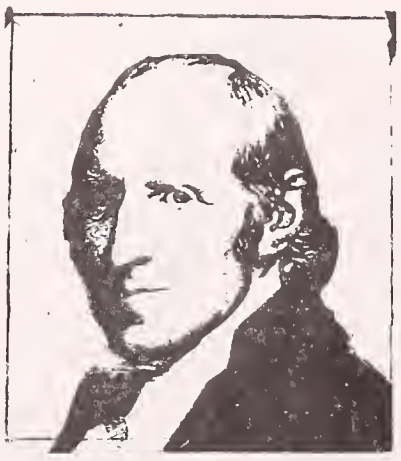
John Parker, Captain of the Lexington militia. See Pitcairn and Parker At Lexington Green.

Paul Revere, left, 40, a Boston silversmith who had been an express rider for Committees of Public Safety since 1773. He was a member of the Sons of Liberty and of several political clubs in Boston. An active participant in the Boston Tea Party.

William Dawes, right, a cordwainer (shoemaker) who was also a moonlighting express rider. He loved to act and was good at it. This picture is from a portrait painted when he was much older.

Dr. Samuel Prescott, a young doctor of Concord, feeling his oats, an ardent swain, burning the candle at both ends, a daring rider. An unplanned addition to the messenger crew. The one who got the job done.

William Heath, left, a militia Major-General, a late comer, who made the decision that prevented the annihilation of the British column.



Timothy Pickering, right, Colonel of the Salem militia, a foot-dragger, who accepted Heath's poor decision, and contributed nothing.

Samuel Adams, left, 53, a loud leader of the Sons of Liberty. a sly politician, persona-non-grata in Boston, on his way to the Second Continental Congress. He believed the goal justified the means, come what may.

History Lesson Recalled - Lexington and Concord In Brief

Cast of Characters, continued

John Hancock, right, 38, a rich politician with a big name, not averse to a bit of smuggling. Also on the lam from Boston on the way to Philadelphia. After 1776 his name became a synonym for signature.

1800 British soldiers and marines, give or take a few.

4000 Militiamen.

Noah, Jeremiah, John and Samuel Wiswell, militiamen of the East Company, Newton.

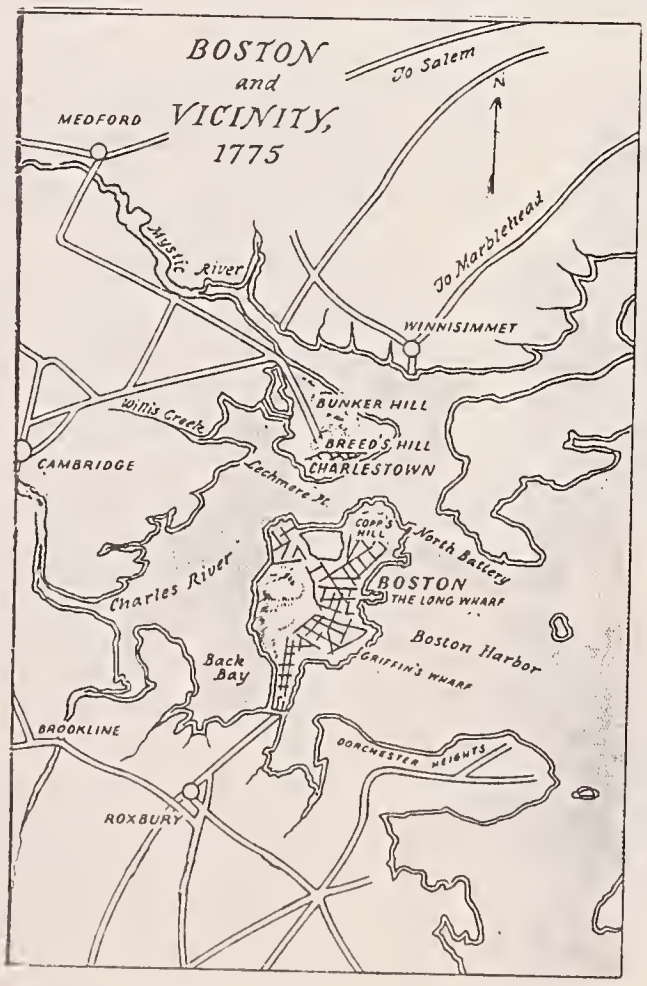
This is an artist's conception, long after the fact, of three Massachusetts militiamen who participated in the day's events. None of them is a Wiswell (a), but at this distance it's hard to be sure.

Fortunately the 19th was rather cool, a bit windy but sunny. These fellows are ill equipped for fighting in the rain.

Why did men of this era, civilian or military, wear such dumb hats?

The Scene

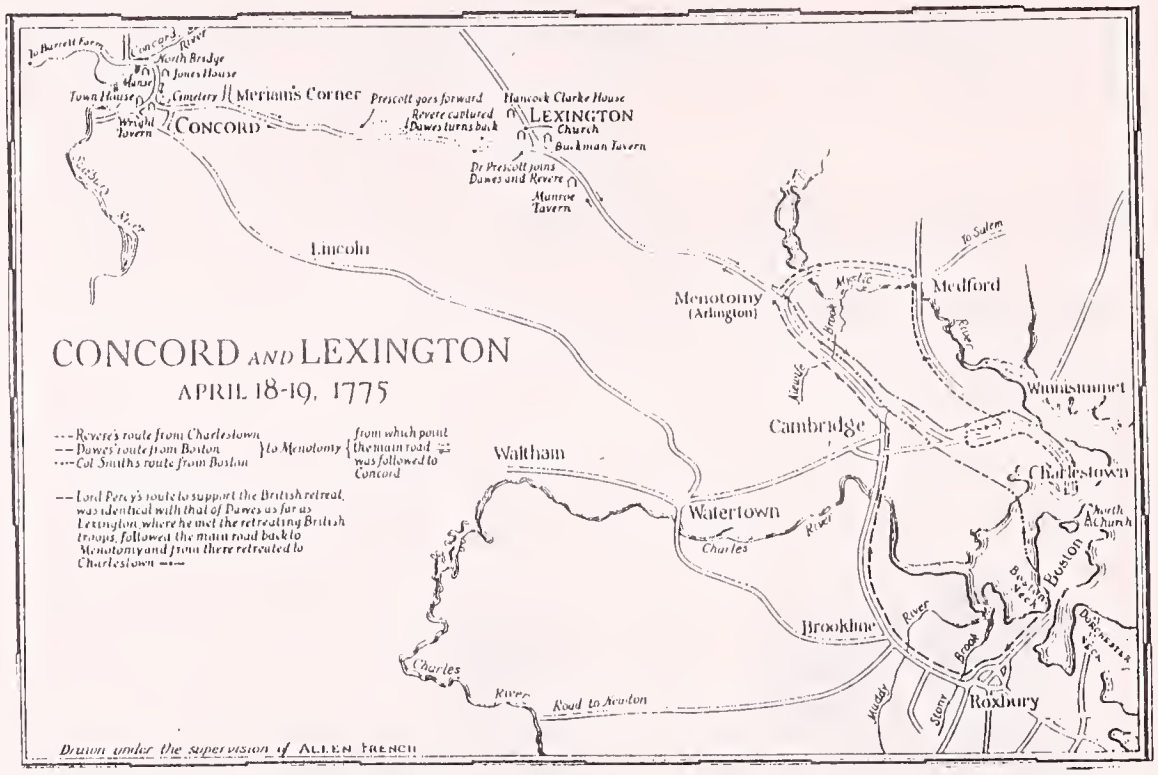
The map at the right demonstrates the geography which influenced the choice of routes chosen by Revere, Dawes, Smith and Percy in leaving or returning to Charlestown or Boston.



History Lesson Recalled - Lexington and Concord In Brief

The Scene, continued

This map shows the areas of the Concord expedition, with points of decisive action clearly indicated.



Epilogue To The Introduction

The following are naked facts, presented impartially. Innumerable questions have been asked about the day-long action. Why did they do this? Who did that? Why didn't somebody do something else? Who in the world was to blame for that? Were they blind? How stupid could they get? These things have been debated for years; alas, there are no answers here. Blunders were made on both sides, some serious, others not significant or even comic. Today, 217 years later, the missed and bungled opportunities are manifest, but we weren't there, were we?

British Soldier

British soldiers in the ranks fought hard, professionally and courageously against unexpected odds, with few, if any, military alternatives. At times their leadership was tentative, at best.

The militia displayed guts and tenacity, held together by mutual anger and purpose. Overall direction was initially absent, then late and ineffective. Men of the militia came away from the dav's fighting with respect for their opponents and confidence in their ability to cope with anything that threatened their liberty.

In the Time-Table following I have tried to express personal impressions of the fighters, or what I think they were. This is easy to do. Put yourself in their shoes.

Militiaman

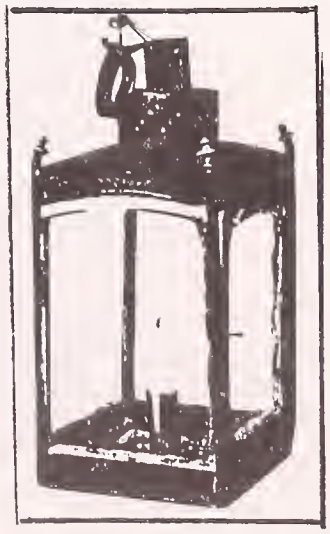
History Lesson Recalled - Lexington and Concord In Brief

When, Where and Who

Time Table	Action
4/15/1775 Boston Gage	Returning scouts and countryside loyalists advised General Gage that arms were being accumulated in Concord and that Samuel Adams and John Hancock were staying in Lexington, up to no good. He decided to appropriate or destroy that inventory, to shake the iron fist a little, and at the same time to arrest the two patriot leaders. 21 companies of light infantry and grenadiers, about 750 men, were detached from their regiments for "new evolutions" training. This was probably an ill-advised move. Men were removed from their normal formations and functions and chain of command. The few days of to-ing and fro-ing training probably confused the troops more than it did the observers of the maneuvers. That was insufficient time to put together a cohesive force. Many of the subalterns were youthful volunteers out for a lark. The men didn't know them, nor were they aware of the men's abilities. Lt. Colonel Francis Smith was named to lead them, with Lt. Colonel Bernard commanding the grenadiers and Royal Marine Major John Pitcairn in charge of the light infantry. Francis Smith was a slow, ponderous man, sometimes called "bumble puppy" by his men. Bernard and Pitcairn were reliable, level-headed, evidently chosen because Gage was aware that Smith would need strong back-up.
4/15/1775 Boston Citizens	This activity of the troops was closely observed and word was passed along the scuttle-butt grapevine. Since the obvious target was Concord, the townsmen there were advised to transfer all portable stores to Worcester and to hide what could not be moved in time.
4/16/1775 Boston Gage	Whaleboats of the British transport fleet were beached, inspected, repaired when necessary, then moored to men-o-war anchored in the Charles River, off the Common. Gage's informants told him the colonials were alert, suspicious, ready for something.
4/17/1775 Boston Citizens	Colonial spies reported the troop and boat movements, relayed conversations heard at British Headquarters, in pubs, in the streets, in billets, in bed. Regular couriers Paul Revere and William Dawes were designated to spread the alarm when Smith committed his forces. Revere was to ride from Charlestown, Dawes to go south across Boston Neck then north and east. Since the shortest route to Concord was across the Charles and through Cambridge, all signs pointed to that as the probable route. Revere made a quick ride to Lexington to alert Adams and Hancock and to discuss measures to be taken.

History Lesson Recalled - Lexington and Concord In Brief

When, Where and Who, continued

Time Table	Action
4/18/1775 9:00 PM Boston Smith	The British "special evolution" troops were aroused if sleeping, ordered to take all equipment and rations, to move quietly in the dark streets in pairs or small groups and to report on the Common river-bank at ten o'clock. Gage, becoming nervous, increased the number of mounted patrols out on the roads and widened their areas of coverage.
10:00 PM The Common Smith	The light infantry and grenadier companies were on the Common, ready. Colonel Smith did not show up. There was some grumbling in the ranks, out of hearing of officers.
10:00 PM Boston Dawes	William Dawes carefully avoided the British sentries posted on Boston Neck, then rode out of Boston on his way to Concord via Roxbury, Brookline and Cambridge, arousing the households along the way, watching for and dodging patrols.
11:00 PM The Common Smith	Colonel Smith finally showed up, fashionably late. The men got the show on the road, embarked in the boats and were rowed across the river to Lechmere Point in East Cambridge. Everyone forgot about the tides and the effect of the delay and the troops went over the side to wade ashore in cold, crotch-deep salt water. Once there, they were ordered to stand to, to wait for the boats to bring provisions.
11:00 PM Charlestown Revere	 Paul Revere paced nervously in Charlestown, having been rowed across from Boston, swinging on a wide course to avoid the eyes of the lookouts on HMS Somerset, riding at anchor at the mouth of the Charles, its 64 guns always a threat. When he saw the two lights in the belfry of the old North Church, he mounted a horse borrowed from John Larkin, said to be the best in the colony, and set off on the road to Cambridge. Not far along, in the bright moonlight he spotted two of the British patrol under the trees. He quickly reversed direction but not before they had seen him. His borrowed horse proved its speed and easily lost the heavier cavalry horses of the pursuers. Revere turned into the Medford road, following it along the western bank of the Mystic River. As he passed each house he roused the occupants then rode off again in a clatter of hooves. 

History Lesson Recalled - Lexington and Concord In Brief

When, Where and Who, continued

Time Table	Action
4/18/1775	
11:59 PM Lexington Revere	Paul rode the twelve miles to Lexington in an hour to find half-a-dozen men guarding Clark's house, where the two delegates were staying. He advised Adams and Hancock to make tracks immediately for elsewhere. They left in a light chaise without Hancock's trunk containing a lot of incriminating documents. Revere sat down, bent an elbow, waiting for Dawes.
11:59 PM Lechmere Pt. Smith	Meanwhile, back at the beach, the provision boats arrived and rations were distributed to the men. Some trashed theirs since they had brought their own and already they had too much to carry. (Another story says that an officer waited two hours to tell Smith the men already had their rations.) Either way, the cavalcade got underway. A sample of beautiful staff work!
4/19/1775	
12:30 AM Lexington Dawes	William Dawes rode into Lexington after a long, hard but uneventful ride. He and Revere tossed back a few and ate something while they conferred with the local people.
1:00 AM En Route Revere, et al	Revere and Dawes left Lexington on the road to Concord. Just outside of town they met Dr. Samuel Prescott, a Concord Son of Liberty, a young physician who was returning home from a late date with a Miss Millikan of Lexington. He joined them and as they rode, they explained the situation to him. Midway to Concord, the three were apprehended by a large English mounted patrol. Revere and Dawes were dismounted, but Prescott put his horse at a stone wall and escaped, continuing toward Concord. Dawes, play acting, claimed to be one of the patrol and ran off into the bush. The patrol walked Revere back toward Lexington and then left him. His horse was absorbed into the British Cavalry. Prescott rode into Concord at 2:00 AM. Revere walked back to Lexington, found the trunk with Hancock's papers and had it safely hidden when Pitcairn's troops arrived.
2:00 AM Lexington Parker	John Parker assembled parts of three companies of Militia and an "alarm" company on the Green to discuss what to do. Shortly they broke up to await a drum-roll signalling the enemy's approach. Many repaired to Buckman's Tavern for warmth and attitude adjustment.
2:00 AM En Route Smith	Smith's file waded through Willis Creek rather than run the risk of awakening people with the noise of 1500 boots on the plank bridge. (Now they try to be quiet! Who's sleeping?) The men finally clambered up onto the Cambridge road and tramped off along it, soaked to the waist again from the second, cold,salty wade of the evening, already tired, impatient, uncomfortable, mad as hell, and late.

History Lesson Recalled - Lexington and Concord In Brief

When, Where and Who, continued

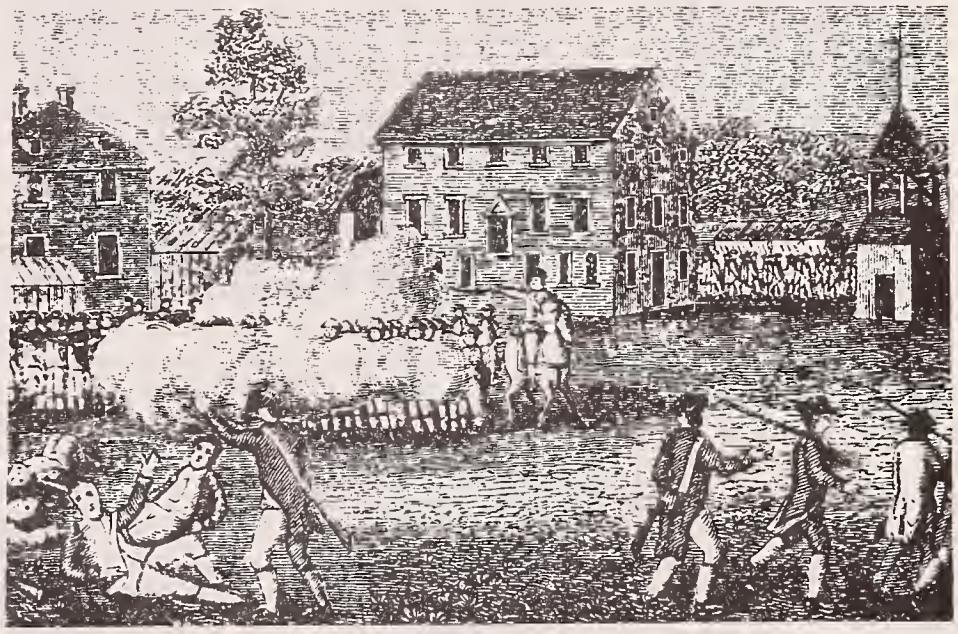
Time Table 4/19/1775	Action
2:00 AM Boston Gage	Disturbed by continuing reports of country side bustle, Tom Gage ordered Lord Percy's brigade to be ready to march at 4:00 AM. This brigade would consist of 900 men, three regiments, a Marine battalion and two six-pounder cannon, with crews, horses and caissons to serve the guns.
2:30 AM En Route Smith	Smith halted his men to take five, have a drink of water, take a leak, to ease the grip of salt-water soaked and shrinking breeches, gaiters and coat tails, and to empty their squelchy boots. Then off again, chafing with each stride.
2:30 AM Countryside Citizenry	The redcoats heard solitary shots, church bells ringing, rolls of drums, muffled shouts, occasional loud profanity, the distant clop of horses' hooves. They saw shadowy figures leaving doorways and scurrying into woods, a quick glint on a musket barrel. The English soldiers did not accost, waylay or question anyone, nor did they disturb a single home.
3:00 AM Menotomy Smith	The column reached Menotomy (Arlington). Smith, alarmed by the apparently increasing movement of the citizens, sent a mounted officer back to Gage with a request for reinforcement. Pitcairn's six light infantry companies were sent ahead at a faster pace, the column following.
3-4:00 AM Countryside Militia	Militia men alerted by Revere and Dawes or by the noise of the passing troops, formed their pairs and squads and companies and set off, cross-country, toward Concord or designated rallying points. Mounted secondary messengers rode in all directions to more remote communities. "The redcoats are coming! The redcoats are coming!" Do you suppose they actually shouted such nonsense?
4:00 AM En Route Pitcairn	Major Pitcairn halted his companies just outside Lexington for a comfort stop. The troops were ordered to prime and load, to be ready for anything.
4:00 AM Boston Gage	Through a series of unbelievably comic errors, Gage's 2:00 AM order to Percy was not delivered. No one showed up on the Parade Ground at 4:00 AM, not even Percy.

History Lesson Recalled - Lexington and Concord In Brief

When, Where and Who, continued

Time Table	Action
4/19/1775 4:30 AM Lexington Parker	Two thirds of John Parker's militia men and "alarm" volunteers were on Lexington Green when Thaddeus Bowman galloped into the square, shouting that the lobster-backs were a half-mile away. Parker delivered (or did not) his famous speech, later engraved in stone and printed in millions of history texts and tourist brochures. (The modern opinion is that he did not say these words.) He deployed his men in a thin line abreast facing the direction from which the regulars would approach.

This version of the confrontation on Lexington Green is generally accepted as correct, although it is not the one which appeared in older history books.



Here only the British are firing. The militia are either leaving, wounded or tending.

Dawn Lexington Confront- ation	Pitcairn's men came on in columns of four and when near the Green, on order, maneuvered speedily but routinely, as trained, shouting, to form parallel lines. Someone fired "the shot heard 'round the world." To this day, no one knows who it was. No one ever admitted doing it. Then the light infantry fired a volley in the direction of the militia and charged, with bayonets. Many guess, but no one knows how the militia acted. Eight of them were killed, ten wounded.
4:55 AM Lexington Smith	Colonel Smith halted the rest of the column at Lexington, but only for a short time. Some accounts said his men fired a volley, but I doubt it. Who would they shoot at? The only people there were dead or wounded or attending to them. The combined English column realigned and moved off down the road to Concord, five miles away.
5:00 AM Boston Gage	Smith's messenger from Menotomy finally got to Boston. What kept him? Two hours to ride about 6 miles? Maybe he was thirsty. Gage issued new orders for Percy's brigade to get going. A message was sent to Royal Marine Headquarters addressed to Major Pitcairn, who was then leaving Lexington with the light infantry. Evidently no one dared open the message in the Major's absence. Confusion reigns! The marines slept on, oblivious.

History Lesson Recalled - Lexington and Concord In Brief

When, Where and Who, continued

Time Table	Action
4/19/1775	
7:00 AM Concord Smith	The original British column reached Concord about 7:00 AM and marched in with drummers drumming and fifes piping. (An odd circumstance - militia bandsmen with their own fifes and drums screeching and banging, escorted the lobster-backs to the square.) Evidently no one expected or wanted trouble. Was this a gesture of appeasement or of defiance?
8:00 AM Boston Percy	Percy's troops finally took off, tramping south across Boston Neck then turning north and east through Roxbury and Brookline on the way to Lexington. This was a few miles longer than Smith's route, but at least it was dry. The men were rested and stepped off smartly, having to make up some of the time lost doodling and dawdling.
8-11:59 AM Concord Smith	Smith's men demanded food from the townspeople, got it and paid for it. (What in hell happened to the provisions they received or already had at Lechmere Point?) Grenadiers were soon searching for military stores. Some townspeople were rather feisty about the search but there were no serious disagreements. Tightly tied leather bags of bullets and intact barrels of flour were thrown into the millpond. (These were salvaged later, unharmed.) There were all sorts of clever hiding places and some imaginative lying (men and women) to foil the searchers. Cannon barrels had been buried in deeply plowed furrows, covered with earth. The gun carriages were too big to hide successfully and many of these were burned.

There was a confrontation at North Bridge, with a few casualties on both sides. The net result was the retreat of the outnumbered redcoats assigned to that spot. This has been memorialized by Ralph Waldo Emerson in his Concord Hymn.

Engagement at the North Bridge, at Concord.

At the right and on the next page are three drawings of the events at North Bridge, all quite different, and who knows which, if any, is a true reflection of what happened there. Nobody.

Just before noon, the British wounded were loaded on chaises rented by Smith and paid for from his own purse. The wounded were treated by local doctors. The column reformed and left at noon, headed east, back the way they had come. No band music.

History Lesson Recalled - Lexington and Concord In Brief

When, Where and Who, continued

Time Table	Action
4/19/1775 8-11:59 AM Concord Smith	This is another artist's idea of the exchange of shots at North Bridge.

Here is still another version. The details are quite different.

7-11:59 AM
Countryside
Militia

While Smith's troops rested, ate and skirmished briefly at Concord and Percy finally got off the dime in Boston, the lanes, back roads and forest paths were filling with angry militiamen from near and distant towns, meeting in groups, brought up to date by the locals. Then, with no central leadership but displaying good military sense and cooperation, they arrayed themselves at points of vantage along both sides of the Concord-Lexington road, forming a murderous gauntlet through which the British must pass.

History Lesson Recalled - Lexington and Concord In Brief

When, Where and Who, continued

Time Table	Action
4/19/1775 12:30 PM Meriam's Corner Smith	One mile east of Concord, at Meriam's Corner, the militia began to harass Smith's men, selecting their own ranges, denying the regulars a target for a volley, much less a bayonet charge. But they were not marching as lamb's to slaughter, either; infantry flankers were out, chasing elusive fighting farmers, providing a thin shield, flushing snipers from vantage points, forcing movement.

The Retreat from Concord

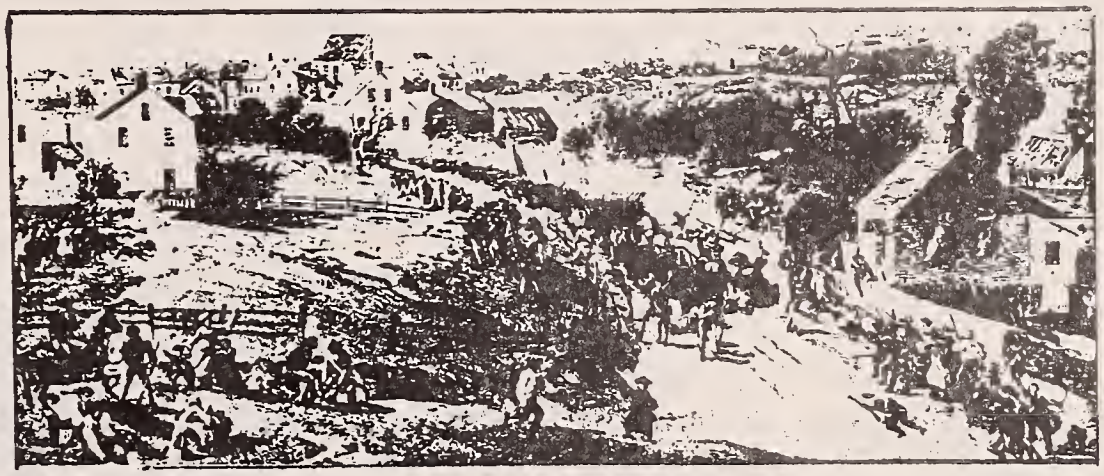
And with each step the regulars, with no more than three hours sleep since yesterday morning, tired, probably thirsty, needing to relieve themselves but not daring to hesitate, frustrated, beginning to lag, to have moments of panic as comrades were hit and fell from the ranks. They were held together by the will and experience of veteran officers and non-coms, and by their own disciplined, typical English stubbornness. The last mile to Lexington was a rugged, last ditch, panting, straining, bitter stretch. And still fresh militia were arriving, unblooded but eager for it.

1:30 PM Near Lexington Pitcairn	Just west of Lexington Pitcairn tried to rally the companies but his horse threw him and bolted into the militia lines where it was captured. And here too, Smith was wounded in the leg. Obviously, snipers were concentrating their fire on mounted officers. Smith remained mounted at that time, but we don't know if he was obliged to dismount and ride in a chaise or wagon the rest of the way to Charlestown.
2:30 PM Lexington Percy	Percy's column reached Lexington at 2:30 PM to hear reports of the problems Smith's force was having, ammunition running low, the men exhausted. He placed his two cannon on high ground commanding the Green, and aligned the line companies and marines in line of battle. As Smith's men approached they stumbled through the lines and collapsed, spent. The cannon soon earned the respect of the colonials and they kept their distance, giving the first column time to rest, recoup, regain their composure.
2:30 PM Lexington Heath	Militia General Heath arrived on the scene, but he didn't know what forces he had, where they were nor what to do with them. The militiamen continued to fight as they had been, waiting for opportunities and taking advantage of them, without specific orders except those from their company captains and lieutenants.

History Lesson Recalled - Lexington and Concord In Brief

When, Where and Who, continued

Time Table	Action
4/19/1775 3:30 PM Roadway Militia	Fresh companies were constantly arriving, eager for a piece of the action. Firing began again and more muskets were speaking now. They had to contend with two very well served guns of the Royal Artillery, to time shots, calculate ranges and directions of fire. They may have been more cautious but the pressure on the redcoats did not let up. There was house-to-house fighting in Menotomy. Lt. Colonel Bernard was wounded there. The angry British, in flushing out snipers from houses, did not hesitate to do as much looting as they could, a soldier's prerogative in those days. Flurries of hand-to-hand fighting flared up when militiamen moved to closer range, challenging the marchers.



The Retreat from Concord.

4;30 PM Cambridge Percy, et al	When the British came to Cambridge and were told that a large solid body of militia lined the way to the river, Percy ordered a detour east to Charlestown.
5:00 PM East of the Line of March Pickering	Timothy Pickering, with several companies of well-trained, well-armed Salem militia, after a day of stalling and delay, finally arrived on Percy's left flank, a position from which he could have rolled up the line and turned the defeat into a debacle. He sent a message to Heath, asking for orders. Heath, who had done nothing all day, told Pickering to do nothing. Pickering had also been doing this all day and he continued to follow that course, to the dismay and disgust of his men.
6:00 PM Charlestown Percy	The British troops, hard pressed, guarding their wounded in carriages and chaises, limped across the narrow neck of the peninsula of Charlestown, where 500 fresh troops awaited them, ready to seal off the narrow road behind them. The militia, wary, could see the guns protruding from the open ports of the British men-of-war close to shore. They had had enough of cannon since Lexington, and broke off pursuit. Gage's army was safe for the day. Lucky, beaten, but safe.
Sundown Boston Area Militia	Militia units were still arriving and patriot soldiers would continue to come for two months. Concord-Lexington was history. But Bunker Hill had yet to be fought. The British had been taught a lesson, but the colonials had lessons to learn.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

History Lesson Recalled - Lexington and Concord in Brief

What of the Wiswells In All This

We don't know exactly where the Wiswells were on April 19, 1775. Francis Jackson, in his History of Newton says the Newton militiamen fired shots at Concord and "hung on their flank from Concord to Lechmere Point." He also stated that Dr. Joseph Warren praised the Newton contingent at Lechmere Point. These statements are suspect since we know the British did not return via Lechmere Point. I think the Newton people could have been most anywhere since Newton is only 14 miles from Concord and 7 from Lexington as the big black bird flies. I'm sure they deserved Warren's praise, wherever he declaimed it.

Half-way Apology

The snide diatribe about Timothy Pickering and his actions on April 19, 1775 may give an incorrect impression of the man. To my mind his lack of action on that day was something less than heroic. He had written a manual of arms, well received. He did not believe that the colonies should go to war against the Mother country, as did many others. However, he served on the 1774 Committee of Correspondence, as Adjutant General and Quartermaster General in the Continental Army. Later he held several cabinet posts in the Washington and John Adams administrations and later still was a member of the House of Representatives.

Postscript

There are two stories about Paul Revere's ride, which may be someone's fiction, maybe even Paul's, since he is said to have told these stories to his children in later years. Do you think he would exaggerate?

Two of Paul's friends, Joshua Bentley and Thomas Richardson, were to row him from Boston to Charlestown in the evening of April 18, 1775. In order to get past the British frigate HMS Somerset, they felt that they should muffle their oars. When the three met at the designated spot, they had nothing with which to do this muffling, but Revere's dog had followed them, hoping to share in the fun.

Either Bentley or Richardson remembered that he had a friend (female) who lived in the neighborhood. A few notes of a special tune whistled under a certain window brought a response, a pretty face. After a few whispers the pretty one threw down a piece of cloth, which proved to be a flannel petticoat, still warm. When they arrived at the spot where Revere kept his boat, he found he had forgotten his spurs but his dog was still with him. Paul wrote a note to his wife and told the dog to take it home. Aha! A new game! Away he went, his nails clicking on the cobblestones. When they had the boat in the water the dog came running back, all-a-pant and a-wag. Tied to his collar was a small bag. You guessed it! The spurs!

Paul's Best Friend

And Longfellow never mentioned the oarsmen or the dog. And they didn't take him, after all he had done.

Pitcairn and Parker At Lexington Green

Major John Pitcairn

This officer has been unjustly accused by earlier historians as the instigator of the killing or wounding of militiamen on Lexington Green early in the morning of April 19, 1775. Intensive investigations 200 years later have led most modern historians to conclude that the charge is untrue and that, to the contrary, John Pitcairn tried his utmost to prevent the tragedy.

John Pitcairn, from an old Fifeshire family, was born in Dysart, Scotland in 1722, the son of Reverend David Pitcairn. He married Elizabeth Dalrymple, a daughter of Robert Dalrymple of Dumfriesshire. He and Elizabeth had at least two children. She predeceased him.

John began his service in 1753 at age 33. Like most commissions at that time, his was probably purchased.

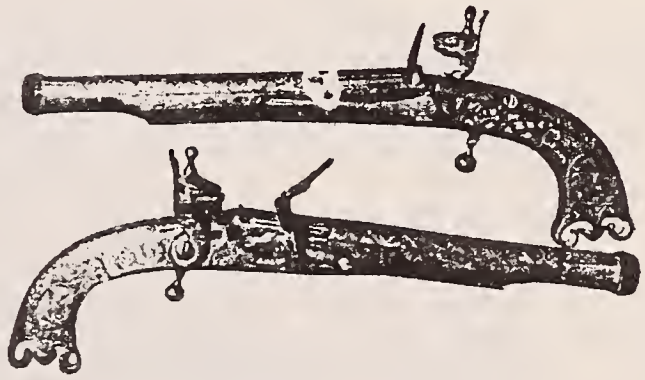
Major John Pitcairn

Thomas Gage placed Colonel Francis Smith in charge of the Concord expedition. This was probably a gesture of friendship, but Gage knew Smith would need dependable back-up. He named Lt. Colonel Bernard to command the Grenadiers and Major Pitcairn to lead the Light Infantry, even though he was a Marine officer. General Gage knew Pitcairn as a rigid disciplinarian with a long and honorable record of service, a man whose humanity and tact had won him the love of his command and the respect of people of all shades of political opinion in the town.

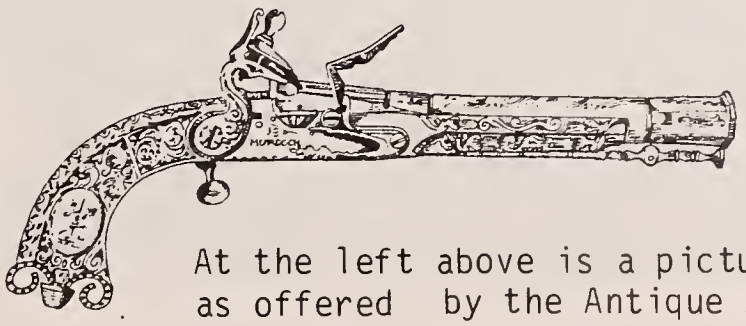
Sometime after noon of April 19, 1775, just west of Lexington, while Major Pitcairn was shepherding his weary men along the line of march, his horse suddenly reared, threw him and bolted into a field toward the colonials. The militiamen secured the horse and in the saddle-bags they found the matched pistols of the major. They were used by Israel in the Battle of Bunker Hill and are today in the possession of the Lexington Historical Society.

John Pitcairn was killed at the Battle of Bunker Hill and died in the arms of his son, Lieutenant Pitcairn of the Royal Marines. The lieutenant carried his father's body to the shoreline, a distance of a quarter-mile.

John Pitcairn's remains are at rest under the Church of St. Bartholomew the Lesser, in London.



In the retreat from Concord Major Pitcairn, Royal Marines, lost these pistols, which American General Israel Putnam used during the war.



At the left above is a picture of a replica of the Pitcairn Pistol as offered by the Antique Arms Committee of the United States Historical Society, one of a limited edition of 900 at $2,950 each.

Pitcairn and Parker At Lexington Green

Captain John Parker

This officer, captain of the militiamen at Lexington Green on April 19, 1775 was then 45 years old, the father of seven, a veteran of Rogers' Rangers, heroes of the French and Indian War. Of the militia who stood with John that morning, about half were related to him or his wife. An elderly cousin, Jonas Parker, was one of those killed.

John was an experienced soldier and certainly he knew, as did most of his men, that they had no chance to oppose the British effectively. He should also have known that their very presence there, however inadequately they were armed, however quietly they stood, was an affront to the redcoats.

When first the town militia mustered about 2:00 AM, after the alarm, John told them he had asked them "to meet upon the Common to consult what to do, and concluded not to be discovered nor meddle or make with said regular troops unless they should insult or molest us."

There's an inconsistency here, since we know they stood up there as bold as life and asked to be discovered. When the British troops appeared near dawn, John made and announcement to his men which is forever engraved in stone and in history books and in the minds of countless school children. This monument on Lexington Green has been read and believed by millions of tourists.

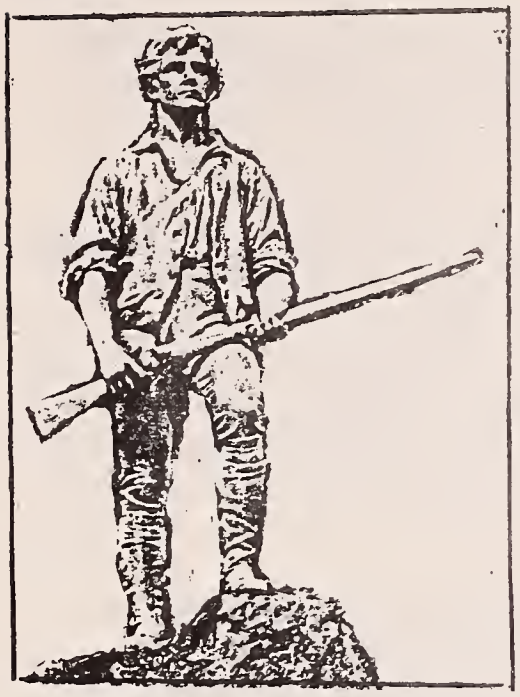
Stand your ground.
Don't fire unless fired upon.
But if they mean to have a war
Let it begin here.

I have some trouble digesting that. It's an inspiring statement, but I cannot imagine Parker saying it under the circumstances. Later Parker testified that, after the British officer ordered them to disperse, and as the troops rushed to a firing position, he told his men to disperse, not to fire. This sounds more consistent with the man we knew him to be. The rock-inscribed words sound, in hind sight, as if they were composed for an occasion, heroic but foolish.

But the English demand was to, "Disperse. Lay down your arms!" Now, no matter what anyone said, the militiamen might disperse, but no way was anyone of them about to give up the musket his father carried to Canada or the fowling piece that put food on his table. No one seems to deny that the militiamen flouted that part of the order and thus rubbed rock salt into the angry ego of the British soldier.

Pitcairn and Parker At Lexington Green

Captain John Parker, continued



The picture provided here is that of the bronze Minuteman atop the monument facing east from Lexington Green. This statue was created by Henry Hudson Kitson and is generally thought to be the face and figure of John Parker. This is hardly possible since there was no portraiture available for a model. Most recent thinking is that this represents a younger man than John, but that the facial expression and stance depicts the bravery and patriotism of John Parker.

John Parker and the surviving Lexington militia were among those contesting Colonel Smith's march from Concord and later hammering away at Percy's rear guard all the way to Charlestown Neck.

John Parker was greviously wounded at the Battle of Bunker Hill on June 17, 1775. He was captured by the British and taken to Boston,where he died a few days later.

Conclusions of the Writer

I feel entitled to an opinion. From what I have read, pro and con, I doubt that Parker had the time to compose or speak the words on the rock. I think he acted cooly under fire. In my opinion both Pitcairn and Parker regretted bitterly the deaths and casualties.

The flash of powder, or the single shot, whatever, that triggered the British volley and charge, probably came from idiot 'heroes' safely crouched behind a stone wall. Certainly the outcome was an idiot's delight.

Here, on Lexington Green on the morning of April 19, 1775, were fired the first shots in the struggle for American independence. The boulder at the right marks the approximate location of one end of the line of Minute Men drawn up to face the approaching British.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Noah Wiswell (1699-1786) and the Battle Lexington-Concord

Action Stories

Descriptions of past events are apt to be dissimilar unless they were photographed, televised or taped. Even then we can't always be sure that data so recorded has not been tampered with, somehow.

Since these things happened on April 19, 1775, we must rely on eye-witness reports which may be exaggerated or diminished, innocently or deliberately. These accounts vary from person to person and from time to time. The longer the interval between occurrence and recital, the more divergent they are likely to be.

There is no doubt that Noah Wiswell, age 76, the great-grandson of Elder Thomas Wiswell and himself a one-time captain of militia, was present at some of the events comprising the Battle of Lexington-Concord. The following stories are not contradictory but there are interesting differences in detail.

Francis Jackson, in his book History of Newton, said that S.F.Smith's Life of Reverend Mr. Grafton states that Captain Noah was in the Battle of Lexington. Three of his sons and some of his sons-in-law were in the East Newton Company, commanded by his son Jeremiah. And now he quotes directly:

> "After the company had marched for Lexington, he started on foot and alone to follow them, saying, "I wish to see what the boys are doing." Standing with some Americans (sic) not far from the field, three British soldiers came in sight; he immediately pointed them out to his companions, saying, "If you aim at the middle one, you will hit one of them." They did so and were successful; the other two fled. As he held out his hand, pointing toward the Britons, a musket ball passed through it. He cooly bound up his hand with his handkerchief, picked up the gun of the fallen regular, and brought it home as a trophy."

Now let's look at the History of Newton written by the same Smith and quoted by Clarence Augustus Wiswall in A Wiswall Line - Ten Generations of Descent. Here Smith is talking originally about Jeremiah Wiswell.

> "During the conflict, his father Noah Wiswell, who was then 76 years of age and was serving as a volunteer in the Company, received a British musket ball through his hand as he was cheering on the boys. But cooly binding it up, he continued to encourage them throughout the day, till, the conflict over, they finally reached home, he bearing a trophy, the musket of a fallen enemy. Truly a remarkable instance of endurance for a man of his years to cover in one day - a distance of twenty-eight miles."

The History of Lexington, speaking of Noah, says that he was:

> "... wounded in the hand by a musket ball at Battle of Lexington, April 19, 1775."

Eben D. Wiswell, in Fifteen Generations of Americans tells virtually the same story, but with minor differences. Listen!

> "On April 19, 1775, after the East Company of Newton left for Lexington under the command of Noah's son Jeremiah, and with Noah's other sons Samuel, Ebenezer and John and several sons-in-law as members, Noah set out alone to follow them. While standing near the battlefield with several other Americans (sic), Noah spotted three British soldiers approaching. His companions killed

Noah Wiswell (1699-1786)and the Battle of Lexington-Concord

Action Stories, continued

"one of the British and the others fled. As Noah pointed to the retreating soldiers, a musket ball passed through the palm of his hand. He cooly bound up his hand with a handkerchief, picked up the dead soldier's gun and brought it home as a trophy of war."

Statements of Fact

This information is based on excerpts from the Massachusetts State Archives and from the pertinent sections of Francis Jackson's History of Newton. It deals with the participation of Newton men in the Battle of Lexington but neither source is quoted directly.

Three companies of Militia marched from Newton on April 19, 1775:

a.) A company of 37 minutemen designated as Phineas Cook's company. When mustered early in the morning of the 19th no commissioned officers were present. Michael Jackson, a private, was chosen as Captain for the day by a show of hands. This company first encountered the enemy at Concord and harrassed them from flank and rear all the way back to Lexington. Here the exhausted light infantry of Colonel Francis Smith was reinforced by Lord Percy's column of comparatively fresh troops. Undeterred, the minute men continued their tenacious pursuit until the enemy escaped across the narrow neck of land to Charlestown.

Michael Jackson later enlisted in General Washington's Continental Army and rose eventually to the rank of colonel.

b.) The West Company of 105 officers and men was commanded by Aramiah Fuller. It was accompanied by 37 volunteers from the 'alarm' company ranging in age from 46 to 72.

c.) The East Company of 76 officers and men led by Jeremiah Wiswell was accompanied by 8 volunteers from the 'exempt' company, ranging in age from 53 to 76. We know who the oldest one was.

We have no particulars of the battle activities of the West and East Companies, but we are confident that everyone fought bravely and to the best of his ability for what he deemed right and just. The minuteman company was commended on the field by General Joseph Warren as the British broke off the engagement at the approach to Charlestown late in the day of April 19, 1775.

Where Did The Newton Militiamen Fight?

We know that the Newton minutemen led by Michael Jackson started fighting at Concord and continued all day until the last Briton crossed to Charlestown at dusk. Like many other companies, they would find positions along the road giving good cover and a wide field of fire, and let the red-coats have it as they passed. Then, avoiding Percy's flankers, they would move a short distance ahead, find another roadside site and wait for the targets to reappear.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

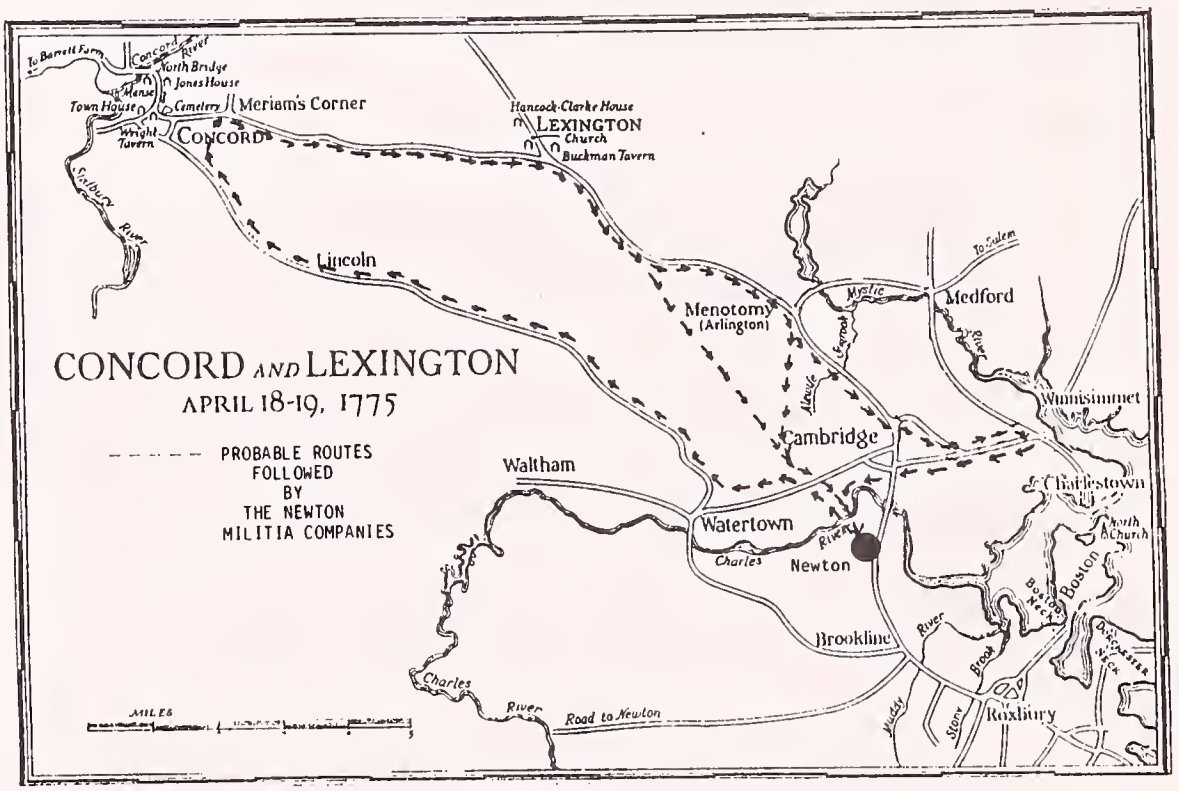
Noah Wiswell (1699-1786) and the Battle of Lexington-Concord

Where Did the Newton Militiamen Fight?

It seems reasonable that the West and East Companies would have followed the Minuteman Company and emulated its maneuvers as best they could. The strongest of them probably pursued to the bitter end; others may have dropped out and started for home as they ran out of ammunition and energy. If Old Noah traveled 28 miles that day he must have been one of the last to leave the action, bum hand and all.

The following map may help you visualize the circumstances on April 19, 1775.

JOSEPH WARREN



The Mystery of Caleb Wright

The lists of Massachusetts Militia Companies and Officers In the Lexington Alarm include one Caleb Wright, who was captain of a Minuteman Company of 16 men from New Marlborough. This is an unusual name. Could this be the same Caleb Wright who helped in the settlement of Bradford County, Pa. and of Tioga County in New York during the decade 1790-1800?

Spreading The News About Lexington

An Unsung Hero

Israel Bissel [Bissell] was a regular post-rider in 1775, aged 23, customarily traveling between Boston and New York carrying dispatches for Committees of Correspondence (later Committees of Public Safety). No one ever wrote a poem about Israel and what he did, but it was his effort in the saddle that speeded the spread of the news about Lexington Green to the other colonies. As far as I know he had no connection with the Wiswells, although he may often have ridden past their homes in Newton or elsewhere.

Details

On Wednesday morning, April 19, 1775, Colonel Joseph Palmer of the Braintree militia was in Watertown, Massachusetts, enroute to Concord. He heard the news of the earlier confrontation on Lexington Green and scrounged quill, ink and paper and wrote the following note:

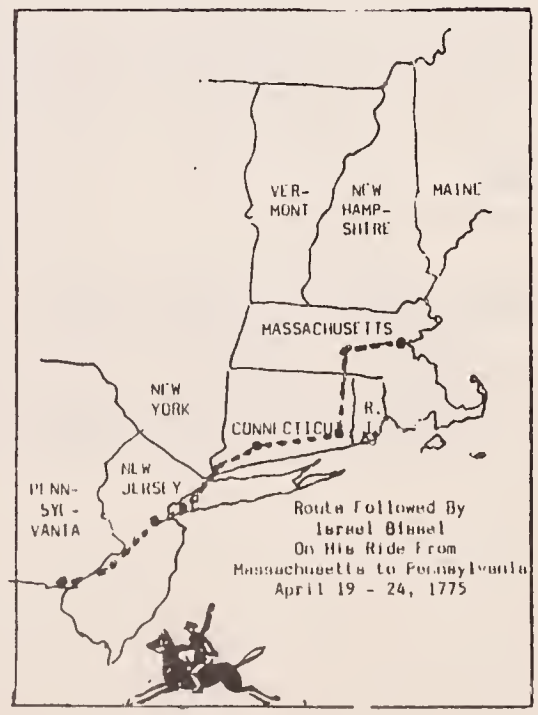
Watertown, Massachusetts
April 19,1775
Wednesday morning near 11 of the clock

> To all friends of American liberty, be it known that this morning before break of day, a brigade, consisting of about 1000 or 1200 men, landed at Phipp's farm at Cambridge and marched to Lexington, where they found a company of our militia in arms, upon whom they fired without any provocation and killed 6 men and wounded 4 others... The bearer Israel Bissel is charged to alarm the country quite to Connecticut, and all persons are desired to furnish him with fresh horses as they may be needed. I have spoken with several who have seen the dead and wounded.
>
> J. Palmer
> One of the Committee of Safety

He gave the note to Bissel for delivery. Since he mentions only Connecticut, I assume Committees elsewhere asked Israel to go as far as Philadelphia. The following is a rough time-table of Bissel's journey.

Wednesday, April 19, 1775

In two hours he had covered the roller-coaster road to Worcester and delivered the news to the local authorities, tradition claiming that his spent horse died under him close to the present Worcester City Hall. The poor beast's sacrifice was in vain. It took the rest of the day for the people of Worcester to absorb the shock, locate another horse, find someone to read the note and copy it, and to arrange a meeting of the local Committee of Safety. Israel spent the night there, off to a poor start.



Thursday, April 20, 1775

Bissel left Worcester at dawn and rode southward, stopping at each town or village to have someone read the note or to change horses when necessary. He stopped at Pomfret for a brief word with Israel Putnam, who was plowing his field. At 7:00 PM, in the dusk, he galloped into New London and read his message at the Long Room of Miner's Tavern. He caught a few hours sleep in an upstairs bedroom.

Spreading The Word About Lexington

Friday, April 21, 1775

Just after midnight he set out for New Haven, sixty miles away. (Did he rouse people on the way to give them the news?) When he reached New Haven in the evening, he was glad to rest his butt.

Saturday, April 22, 1775

He slept in New Haven most of the day, but left early in the evening.

Sunday, April 23, 1775

Shortly after noon, as church goers were leaving Trinity Church in New York City, Israel galloped up, his horse in a lather. The people gathered round as he read the message. Obviously he had been long in the saddle, mud caked his boots and spattered his blue homespun breeches and the inseams were stained with the horse's sweat. Then he wheeled his mount and lashed it with his reins, a la John Wayne, rounded the corner into Wall Street and galloped toward the Committee of Public Safety Chambers in the Merchants' Coffee House. With all that mud, he must have encountered some rain, but that is the only indication we have of unfavorable weather along the way.

Later that afternoon he left New York, was ferried across the Hudson and rode to Brunswick, New Jersey (New Brunswick) arriving there at midnight. It had been a long haul of 90 miles from New Haven. He stopped there, pretty well bushed.

Monday, April 24, 1775

Bissel was in Princeton at dawn, Trenton at nine o'clock, crossed the Delaware and was in Philadelphia, rump-sprung, constipated, bone-tired and badly in need of a bath, in time for supper. That day's ride was only sixty miles. It was 305 miles from Watertown. He deserved a poem.

Other Riders, Other Stories

While Bissel was on the road, other riders left from other towns, in all directions, some with wildly exaggerated or even fictional versions of what happened. (You may have noticed that Palmer's casualty count was inaccurate.) Some people heard that the entire British expedition had been trapped and wiped out by 20,000 militiamen. Others found that Lord Percy had been killed. This would have been a surprise to him, since he was back in Boston receiving congratulations from his boss and his friends.

What Happened To Israel?

I have not been able to find any mention of Israel after his historic ride. In my opinion we should know what he did and remember him for that. Nobody does.

Compiler's Gripe On the Incorrect Use of Terms

Literary License

Readers who have labored this far are aware that I often disagree with terms used by historians. I believe that is one of the rights so nobly defended by Noah and Jeremiah Wiswell and many others on April 19, 1775. I realize that my feeble gestures are futile, quixotic, wind.

Americans?

My current squawk is about the captions on pictures of the participants in the exploits in Massachusetts in April 1775.

The colonial participants are labeled 'Americans.' These men were everything that name implies, but they were not yet 'Americans.' Would they have understood the term if so addressed? I doubt it. This battle occurred before the creation of the United States and before the inhabitants of Massachusetts became citizens of any country other than Great Britain. Were not these people, actually and in their own minds, subjects of the King but presently seriously at odds with their sovereign and his officials?

To British soldiers of course they were simply rebels (damned, usually) and so they called them. What other name could they give them? They had fired at British troops under the British flag who were only obeying the orders of the King's officers.

Sure, this is a tempest in a teapot. Who cares? I care! This error occurs throughout historical literature describing colonial soldiers or representatives who were British subjects. Like Calvin Coolidge and sin, I am against it.

I contend that 'American' used as a noun prior to July 4, 1776 was incorrect, and still is when referring to persons of that pre-Revolutionary period. Of course the historians use the term out of laziness. A pox on their sloth! Use of the term as an adjective, such as an "American colonist" or an "American settler" or even an "American rebel" before the first Independence Day would be apt.

What would I have done, if I'm so smart? I think "provincials" or "colonials" would have been appropriate and at least as descriptive.

Minutemen?

The terms "minutemen" and "militiamen" are used loosely throughout recitals of historic events in the early days of the Revolution in New England. This misuse is evident even in current issues of encyclopedias.

All minutemen were militiamen but only some militiamen were minutemen. Generally however the term "minuteman" has been used to denote any colonial soldier who fought in the battle of Lexington-Concord and the battle of Bunker Hill. Legally, minutemen were to comprise not less than one-quarter of the militia force. Normally, a town's militia force would be about one-third minutemen. This distinctive nomenclature prevailed until the Continental Army was formed and the militia, theoretically at least, went out of existence.

Compiler's Gripe On the Incorrect Use of Terms

Minutemen ?, continued

According to Massachusetts Militia Companies and Officers in the Lexington Alarm about sixty per cent of the force which was engaged at Lexington-Concord was made up of regular militia. 37 per cent of the total were minutemen. The remaining 3 per cent is not explained.

The ratio of minutemen to total force engaged appears, in this instance, to be a bit higher than one would have expected. The imbalance is explained by the fact that more distant towns sent only their minutemen companies immediately upon hearing the alarm and in time to join the battle along the dusty Massachusetts roadway. The other companies from the distant towns did not arrive at the battle scene until it was over on April 20, 1775.

I have no intention of disparaging either group. There and then, minutemen comprised the elite force, but the regular militiamen were in there slugging all the way, taking their lumps, and they deserve a share of the credit.

At this point, my lance blunted and bent, I bow my head and retire. Keep watch!

At the left above is the popular impression of what a minuteman should look like, handsome, fit and ready. (If he doesn't look more closely he's going to lose some of that precious gunpowder.) At the right a minuteman working in the field has just been notified of the alarm by the guy on the horse with the drum. He is unhitching his horses, perhaps to ride one of them when he leaves. His son brings his musket, powderhorn and jacket while his daughter watches from where she has been playing in the dirt. The passersby. on the way, urge him to hurry. Where's his wife?

Hindsight History

An Appraisal of Military Effectiveness

The number of colonial militiamen who participated in the Lexington-Concord battle has been estimated to be a few thousand and as many as a preposterous 20,000. Convincing evidence has been presented that concludes that only about 4,000 militia, including minutemen, lived close enough to have reached the scene on April 19, 1775.

A British captain, present at the battle, stated, "A considerable number of the rebels, but they were much scattered, not above 50 of them to be seen in a body at any place. Many lay concealed, behind stone walls and fences."

There was no central command on the colonial side and militia companies came, maneuvered and left pretty much at the whims of their captains. This would preclude planning for mass action, let alone executing it. Which is just as well because the militia fought the only way they knew and it proved to be successful. A direct confrontation would have been disastrous and they knew it.

American writers have a habit of praising the deadly aim of the Revolutionary amateur soldier. It is possible that Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia frontiersmen, firing long-barreled rifles, were proficient in shooting and deserved that praise. Not so the New Englanders at Lexington and Concord on that historic day. They were using the miscellany of weapons previously described, not a rifle among them.

Here is a candid analysis:

> "If it may be supposed that 2000 militiamen took part throughout the day, firing an average of 3 shots apiece, total British casulaties of 273 out of a compact column of 1800 men would indicate that one bullet out of 20 found its target. The fact is that Massachusetts farmers and villagers of 1775 were no better shots than their descendants today. Many of them were firing at too long range to be effective, and hasty loading by an excited amateur could render a flintlock quite harmless except for its formidable noise and recoil."

And another:

> "The British losses that day were 73 killed, 174 wounded, 26 missing, a total of 273 casualties out of about 1800 men. The militia lost 49 killed, 41 wounded and 5 missing, a total of 95. It has been computed that 3,763 New Englanders were engaged in the day's fighting at one time or another.
>
> "The fact that, in so long a battle, subjected to the fire of so numerous a force, the British lost no more than 15% of their men, is noteworthy. If each colonial, in his whole day's work, had hit his mark only once, the British force would have been destroyed twice over.

Hindsight History

An Appraisal of Military Effectiveness, continued

> "The militia and minutemen were supposed to carry 36 cartridges, or the equivalent, in loose powder and bullets. If the average man fired only 20 charges (and we heard of some who fired twice that number) no fewer than 75,000 shots must have been discharged at the enemy, with a total of hardly more than 247 hits. Only one bullet out of 300 found its mark. In all his day's work only one man out of 15 hit anybody."

Further Misconceptions About What Happened

A Treasury of American Heritage, published in 1960, presents a cogent commentary on history's treatment of the events on Lexington Green early in the morning of April 19, 1775. 185 years after the fact it compares four pictures of the event.

Everyone knows that Major Pitcairn had ordered the 'rebels' to lay down their arms and disperse. An 1830 drawing of the action shows six militia men firing back, two reloading, none leaving. This is almost certainly fictional. Another print, dated 1832, shows the militia dispersing in accordance with Pitcairn's order. The British volley has killed or wounded a few militiamen. No one is returning fire. This is generally considered to be faithful to the facts. In 1855 a drawing shows a few militiamen dispersing, some returning fire, some fallen. In an 1886 picture, fiction finally triumphs, depicting all militia returning fire, reloading, fallen or shaking fists. No one is leaving.

It seems then, that the compilers of Treasury of American Heritage have done a fine job of separating facts and imagination. But wait!

A few pages further on, the same book presents a drawing of militiamen firing from concealment at the British troops marching in close order. It shows five militiamen, identically uniformed, at least three with bayonets attached to their muskets. We know militia had no uniforms but the clothes they wore every day. Bayonets were a rarity among them. Obviously the artist is trying to indicate the prescence of the enemy, but the militiamen would have been foolhardy to be that close to them.

The British officers certainly knew that being on horseback presented a tempting target. They were most likely on foot, leading any surviving horses.

Americans harry the British as they retreat from their "ill plan'd and ill executed" march on to Lexington and Concord.

Hindsight History

Further Misconceptions About What Happened

Minutemen and Mariners, published in 1963, pictures it another way;

Minutemen along the Lexington-to-Boston road fire at the retreating British from behind a stone wall.

Here the militiamen are in nondescript clothing, without bayonets on their muskets. Out of seven men, one is prostrate, presumed dead, while another is obviously wounded. The percentage of casualty is a bit high for such a small group. These men are also too close to the line of march for their own good. Here again, the artist wants to indicate the presence of the enemy, but may be distorting facts to do so.

If Only -----

The British could have been annihilated that day if three elements had occurred a little differently.

The militia companies of Salem were reputed to be the largest, best-trained and best armed in the colony. Their commander was Timothy Pickering, who heard of the regulars marching in his Registry of Deeds Office in Salem between eight and nine o'clock in the morning of the 19th. He thought that by the time he could get ready to do something the British would already be back in Boston. So he did nothing. His men, however, insisted he get off his duff and march. They did. There was a tavern a few miles out of Salem where Pickering called a halt to wait for a message. No message came and again his men prodded him into movement. He continued at a slow pace. When he finally arrived on the scene the British had just escaped into Charlestown. Conceivably Pickering's force of 700 men could have ripped up Percy's left flank and denied him access to Charlestown Neck.

Lord Percy brought two six-pounder cannon with him when he left Boston with his relief column. These cannon proved to be crucial in several instances in providing breathing room for the regulars. No account of any attempt to silence the guns or

Hindsight History

If Only ---- , continued

to apprehend the ammunition caissons has come down to us, if indeed any was conceived. Even if Pickering had arrived on time, this artillery might have discouraged him or prevented him from accomplishing very much or even kept him from receiving a message.

Some militiamen were at Concord early on the morning of the 19th. If they joined the harrassing forces as soon as Smith left for Lexington, somewhere along the line they may have run out of ammunition or became exhausted or might have gone home. Companies were arriving all day, leap-frogging other companies to get better shots. Others, tired, hungry or unhappy with their officers were leaving. If they had all stayed there might not have been enough rocks on which to rest their guns when firing.

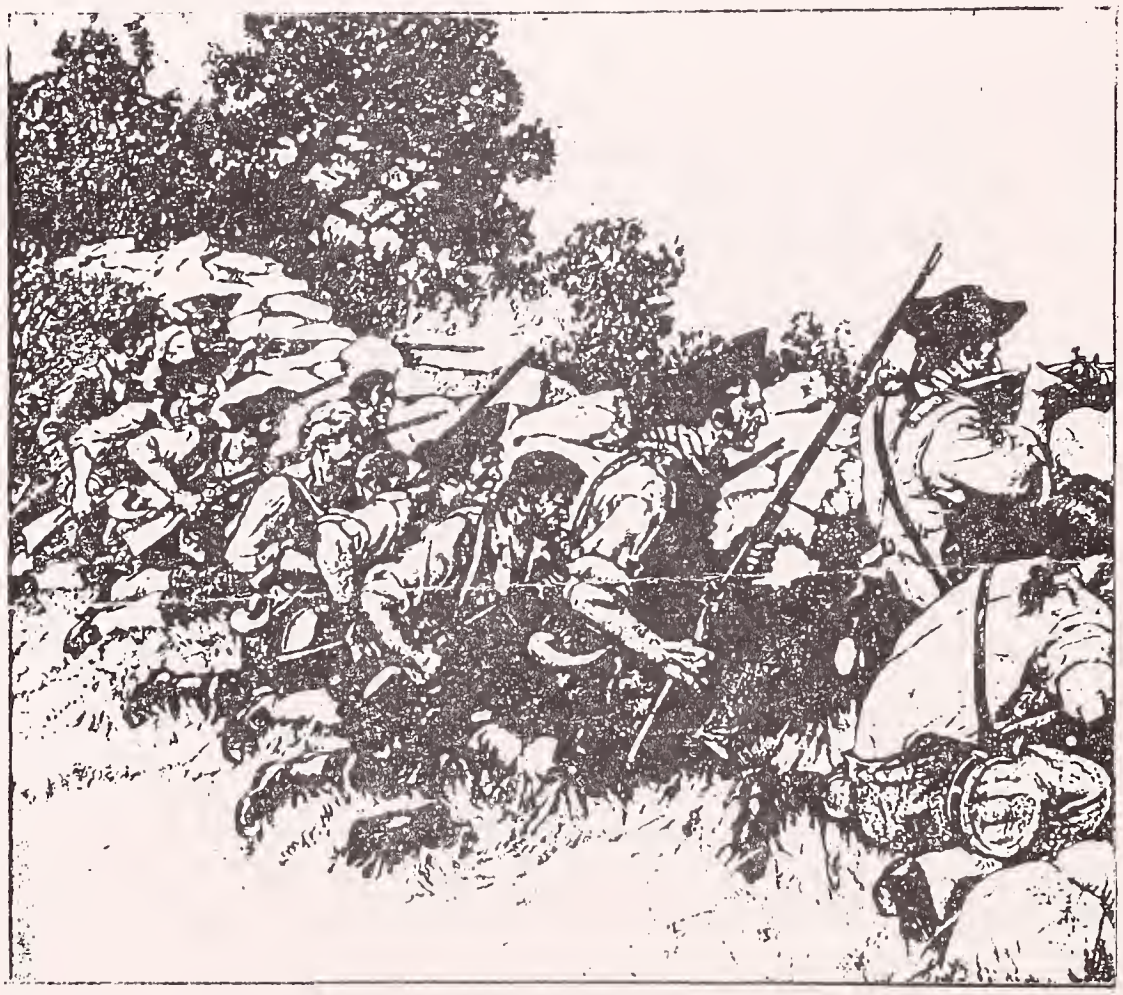
If there had been 3700 men still with ammunition and still firing when Percy began his detour to Charlestown, the result might have been different, in spite of poor marksmanship.

If someone had thought to fell a few dozen trees across the roadway Smith and Percy had to take, the delays for clearance would have bunched the red-coats into hard-to-miss targets. Such situations repeated every few minutes for several miles would have created confusion and even chaos.

The Newton (No Nonsense) Militia

Here are some business-like militiamen, grimly intent on their jobs. They look like a tough, capable bunch.

Can you pick out John, Samuel, Ebenezer and Jeremiah Wiswell of Newton East Company? I think they are the four closest to the reader.



John Wiswell and The Destruction of Falmouth, Maine

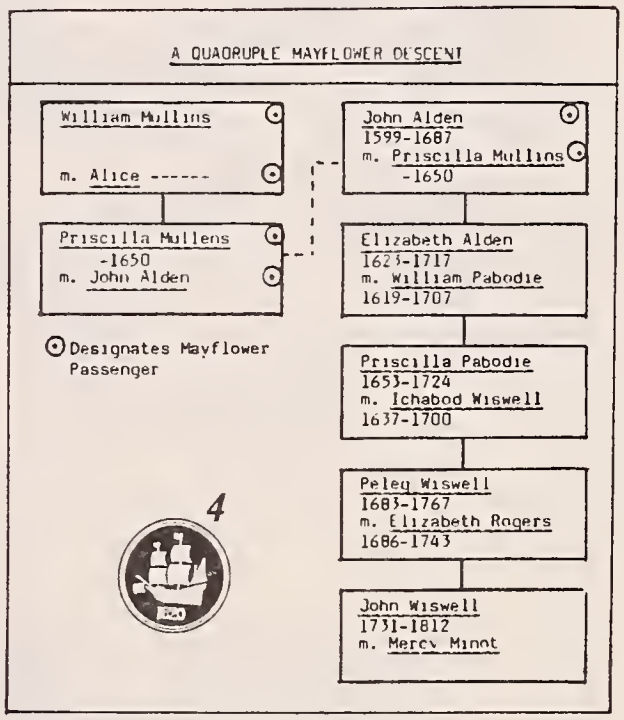
Pertinent Particulars

Earlier I described the misfortunes of Noah and John Wiswell in trying to catch and punish French and Indian forces who attacked Casco Bay in 1690. Later I will outline problems encountered by George Ingersoll and his family in 1675 and 1690. Eighty-five years after the deaths of Noah and John Wiswell at Wheelwright's Pond in New Hampshire, another John Wiswell was involved in the destruction of the town of Falmouth (previously Casco Bay).

This place has had a series of names since the white men 'bought' it from the original Indian inhabitants. In 1632 it was Machingonne, then Indigreat, Casco Elbow and Casco Neck. Then the 'modern' names began - Casco Bay, Casco, Falmouth and now Portland. When these events occurred it was known as Falmouth.

John Wiswell In Falmouth

This John Wiswell descended through Elder Thomas, his son Ichabod and grandson Peleg. He was born in Newton, Mass. on April 15, 1731, the descendant of four passengers on the Mayflower, as demonstrated on the chart at the right. John attended Harvard College and became a clergyman, accepting a Congregational Church parish in Falmouth, Me. in 1756. Eight years later he changed his religious views and went to England for ordination in the Church of England. Returning to Falmouth, he became pastor of St. Paul's Episcopalian Church, newly built, a fine assignment for a 33 year old man.



Falmouth had many local protestors against the apparent British disregard for the rights of colonial citizens. Nevertheless, many of Falmouth's better class residents were loyalist in their sympathies, John Wiswell among them. Political or religious preferences aside, the town had a profitable trade with England, principally in spars and straight masts from the surrounding pine forests.

Falmouth Flouts The British Navy

In mid-May, 1775, a month after Lexington-Concord, the British sloop-of-war Canceau, commanded by Captain Henry Mowatt, put into Falmouth, ostensibly to discuss a shipment of masts being loaded in the harbor, bound for England. Mowatt came ashore with his surgeon and met with Reverend John Wiswell, with whom he was evidently acquainted.

The three men strolled toward a hill on which a company of militia was encamped. Captain Thompson, the militia commander, felt that they were snooping and arrested them as spies.

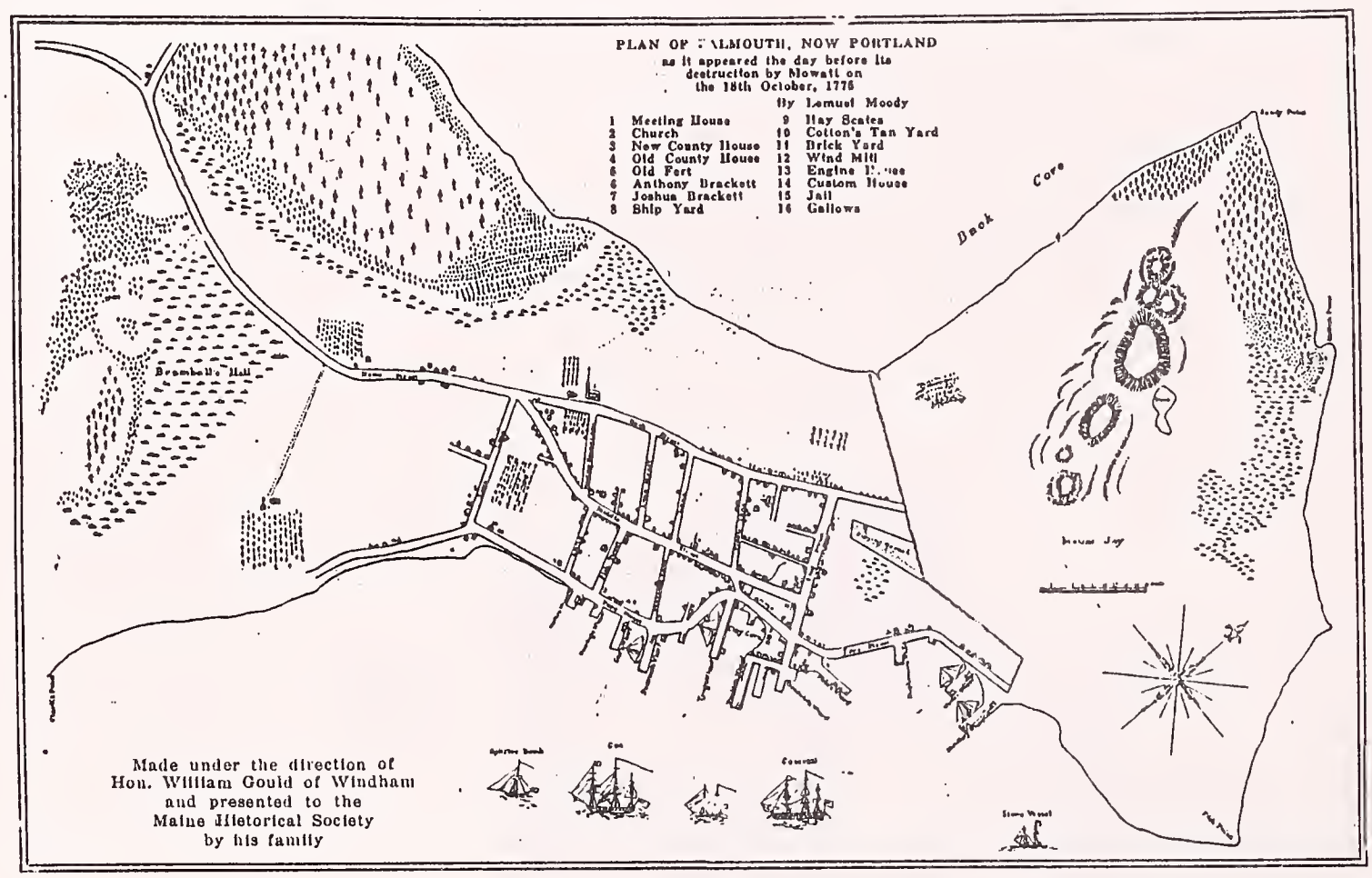
John Wiswell and The Destruction of Falmouth, Maine

Falmouth Flouts the British Navy, continued

Townsmen pleaded for their release; Thompson finally consented, on the condition that Captain Mowatt would appear, when called, for judicial proceedings. This was a face saving gesture since it was a ridiculous request. Mowatt did so promise, probably with his fingers crossed, having no intention of keeping his word, given under duress to this rag-tag militiaman. Canceau departed with an angry, humbled captain, leaving the mast-carrying vessel still in port.

The British Navy Returns

On October 16, 1775, the Canceau, three other British naval vessels and a supply ship, all under the command of Captain Mowatt, appeared in Falmouth Harbor and anchored in the positions illustrated below.



The people of the town assumed the British were foraging, hid anything they thought they might want and drove their live-stock into the neighboring countryside. On the afternoon of the 17th, Mowatt sent Lieutenant Alexander Frazer ashore to notify the people of the town's punishment. In two hours, they were informed, the town would be burned; it was suggested that 'all human species' leave immediately. A citizen committee boarded the Canceau to make counter-proposals. A compromise was reached. Mowatt agreed to wait until morning, provided they surrender the town's cannon and if the residents would swear allegiance to George III. Some cannon were delivered with the understanding others would be provided the next day.

One account states that on the following morning the assembled townspeople voted unanimously to ignore Mowatt's orders, come what may. (Unanimously? Was John Wiswell there? Where were the other loyalists?)

John Wiswell and The Destruction of Falmouth, Maine

Bombardment and Destruction

Mowatt now had no choice. Firing began at 9:40 AM of the 18th and continued all day with a 'horrible shower of balls, from three to nine pounds weight, bombs, carcasses, live shells, hot shells, grape shot and musket balls.' A witness stated that about 3000 shells were fired.

Lexicological Note: I'm aware that the reader knows that the British fleet threw no dead cats or dogs at the Falmouth buildings. However, some dictionaries do not list 'carcass' as used in late eighteenth century naval ordnance parlance. I resorted to Webster's International Unabridged Dictionary to find:

> Carcass - a hollow case or shell filled with combustibles and thrown from a mortar or howitzer and formerly used to set fire to buildings, ships or fortifications.

The etymology is obscure. I'll spare you that.

A party of British seamen and marines came ashore to touch-off anything the shelling had missed. One of this party was killed and two were wounded, presumably by enraged residents. Mowatt might well have imposed harsher measures in retaliation, but he did not. Not a single resident of Falmouth was killed in the entire engagement but each and every one of them was seriously inconvenienced.

One hundred thirty buildings and two hundred and seventy-eight stores and warehouses went up in smoke. St. Paul's Episcopal Church was destroyed, but, ironically, the old Parish Church survived. So did the town tavern which was used as a court house until 1787. These two buildings are pictured below. 2000 people were left without shelter, with Maine winter coming on.

OLD FIRST PARISH CHURCH

A month after the bombardment, a visitor to Falmouth reported 'no lodging, eating or housekeeping in Falmouth.' In 1777, upwards of 700 people were living there in conditions of extreme hardship, attempting to rebuild. Thirteen years later the population was 3704.

Note - Anson Titus spells John's name Wiswall but each of several other accounts mentioning him use the Wiswell spelling.

John Wiswell and The Destruction of Falmouth, Maine

John's Life Afterward

There is no word of John's actions during the bombardment, but he went to England before the end of 1775. He may have left Falmouth with Mowatt aboard the Canceau since his popularity was probably at rock-bottom and his church was demolished. I cannot imagine any Falmouth resident regretting his departure. He became a curate in England. After the Revolution he established himself in Cornwallis, Nova Scotia. He married a Mercy Minot of Brunswick and had five children. One of them, Peleg, became Judge of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia.

Aftermath

The news of the destruction of Falmouth by a British fleet spread like wild-fire through the colonies and did much to strengthen the will and determination of patriots from Maine to Georgia. The 13 colonies were beginning to think as a unit - what hurt one hurt all- when one became angry they all got mad.

Ingersolls Involved

I think Ingersolls or Ingersoll descendants were among the citizens of Falmouth whose houses or businesses were destroyed by the British guns. George Ingersoll (1618-1694), of the Salem Ingersolls, left Falmouth just before the 1690 Indian attacks, which led eventually to Wheelwright's Pond. He retained title to substantial pieces of Falmouth real estate which some of his heirs later moved back to claim. Ingersolls resided at Falmouth (Portland) for many subsequent generations. Some were residing there in 1895 and I'll bet a penny some are still there.

A Later Unrelated Anecdote

Much of the War of 1812 was fought at sea and naval engagements produced many American heroes. Here is a story of two unsung seamen which demonstrates the futility of war.

On September 5, 1813 two small brigs-of-war , the British Boxer, commanded by Captain Samuel Blyth, and the American Enterprise whose Captain was William Burrows, met in battle on the Maine Coast just off Casco Bay.

The British ship, out-gunned and out-manned, fought valiantly, but lost. The fighting was so fierce that both captains were killed. They are buried side by side in a small churchyard overlooking Casco Bay.

Graves of the American and British Captains, Portland, Me.,

John Wiswell - Inadvertent Innovator

When Did Wiswall Become Wiswell?

If Thomas Wiswall spelled his name that way, why and when did Eben Wiswell's ancestors change it? I think it happened accidently, a slip of the pen, undetected or ignored. I doubt that any amount of research will reveal otherwise. The time, however, can be determined within a few years, thanks to two members of Eben's immediate family.

Leon and Annalee, Investigators Extraordinaire

Leon O. Wiswell, Eben's son, helped his father in revising FGA and is himself a painstaking and zealous genealogical researcher. He and his daughter Annalee, who live in California, visited Jefferson County, N.Y. in the summer of 1990, seeking information about John Wiswell, fifth generation in America and Leon's ggggggggrandfather. The information summarized here is the result of their hard work and care.

Movement from Massachusetts to New York, via New Hampshire

Elder Thomas's great-great-grandson John Wiswall left Newton in 1785 and lived successively in Dedham, Massachusetts, Marlborough, New Hampshire and Lorraine, Jefferson County, New York.

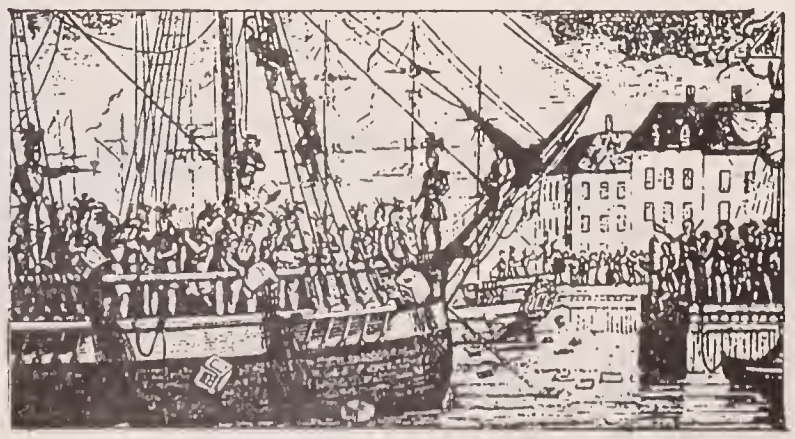
Documents covering the purchase and sale of land in New Hampshire show John's name as Wiswall. The spelling in the earlier of these transactions in 1785 would necessarily dictate the spelling in the latter one in 1809. After John's move to New York State, however, census records consistently show his name as Wiswell (once as Wizzell).

Leon and Annalee also found John's name as Wiswell in two histories of the locality. The History of Jefferson County lists him as living in Lorraine and states that he claimed to have participated in the Boston Tea Party. Our County and Its People- A Descriptive Work On Jefferson County mentions John Wiswell and notes that he was a Revolutionary War veteran. John and his son Samuel are both listed as Wiswells in History of Marlborough although John's New Hampshire real estate transactions are recorded with the "a" spelling.

John's son Samuel moved to Broome County sometime after 1809 and all subsequent pertinent records spell his name with an "e." It seems reasonable that the transition came at the time of John's move to New York, or even a little earlier.

John At The Boston Tea Party

John Wiswell (as Wiswall) was the right age to have participated in the Boston Tea Party in December, 1773. If he did take part, he must have known Joseph Ingersoll (57 S- Chart B - 5th Generation), the proprietor of the Bunch of Grapes Tavern in Boston when it was the meeting place for patriots. According to some sources the plans for the Tea Party were developed here. I don't doubt that the possibility of such a party might



John Wiswell - Inadvertent Innovator

John At The Boston Tea Party, continued

have been discussed at Bunch of Grapes, but the night of the Party the final plans were hatched at the Green Dragon, the party-goers donned their Indian regalia there and they left from there to go to Griffin's Wharf.

Joseph Ingersoll, the Bunch of Grapes host, was a descendant of Richard Ingersoll of Salem, the brother of John Ingersoll of Westfield, who founded the line which merged with the Wiswell family at the marriage of Bernice Milne Ingersoll to Eben D. Wiswell, Senior in 1910.

Another Ingersoll, Daniel (93 S - Chart A - 6th Generation) distantly related to Joseph the tavern keeper, was a member of a club which frequented the long room of Bunch of Grapes where some phases of the plan to destroy tea were discussed. Now, wouldn't you think he would have had a speaking acquaintance with John Wiswall? An interesting speculation.

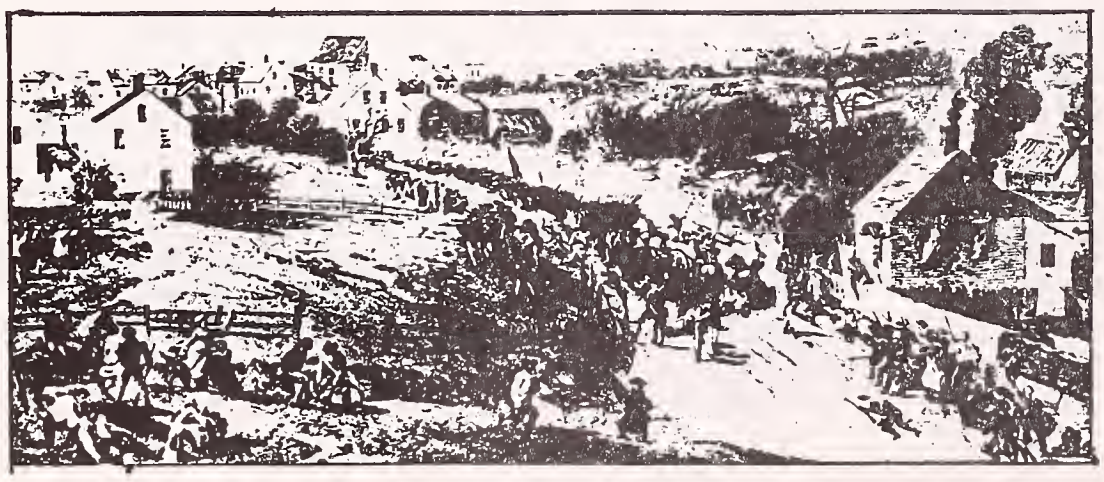
The only list of actual participants in the Boston Tea Party that I have seen has no Wiswall, Wiswell, or Ingersoll. It is not, however, a complete list. I don't know what to make of this but I would guess some people would be eager to appear on such a list, while others would try hard to avoid such a listing. The list is retrospective, prepared from people's memories and fragmentary evidence.

John As A Revolutionary Soldier

We can vouch for John in his claim to be a Revolutionary soldier, although this was in his "a" mode. He and his brothers Samuel and Ebenezer were in a company of Newton militiamen commanded by another brother, Jeremiah, which answered the Lexington alarm on the night of April 18, 1775, and they fought long and hard the next day.

And their father, Noah, 76 years young, was there as a volunteer in his son's company. Elsewhere in these papers there is a description of Noah's part in that famous battle.

A Massachusetts Militiaman



The British Retreat

From Lexington

to Charlestown

April 19, 1775

An Apple For The Teacher

Leon Orlando Wiswell

The first Leon Orlando Wiswell was born November 8, 1855 in Orwell, Bradford County, Pennsylvania and died May 16, 1919 in Albany, New York.

Leon overcame many obstacles and accomplished much in his teaching career. Grandson Eben has described his difficulties and successes in his book FGA. In that succinct summary, Eben mentions many things, including Leon's tenure as Principal of the Nichols Union High School, his invention of a stove truck and his authorship of educational manuals. Evidently Leon was often referred to or addressed as Professor; that title would probably be inaccurate today.

In the mid 1930's, your compiler and his wife, Leon's granddaughter Katherine, often visited the Grosvenor Reference Library in Buffalo. On one such occasion, Katherine found the catalog card registering one of Leon's manuals. I recall that a librarian found the book for us. We were duly impressed, but I cannot remember the title or its substance.

That library has long since been absorbed into the Erie County Public Library and the grand old building with its tremendously high vaulted ceiling in the main reading room has succumbed to the wrecker's ball. A couple of this compiler's genealogical efforts are included in the current computerized index of the new library. If Leon's book is still there his name and mine are ~~are~~ not far apart alphabetically. Please refrain from saying, "It's a small world."

Nichols Union High School (1890)

At the left is a picture of the Nichols Union High School, taken in 1890, which was probably during Leon's days as Principal. I can find no sign of him in the picture, however.

Eben's book contains two pictures of Leon. The earlier shows him as a young man with fashionably fuzzy side-whiskers, an abbreviated tie and a wistful look. The other, taken much later, depicts him as a sedate, handsome gentleman, his gray hair thin but present, with a luxuriant gray mustache. He wears a well-tailored dark suit and a high, stiff, immaculately white collar, with a dark four-in-hand displaying a jeweled tie pin smack in the middle of a nicely-tied knot.

This was probably Leon's "Principal" look; serious but kind, stern but forgiving.

An Apple For The Teacher

Leon Orlando Wiswell, Continued

EVERYBODY WANTS

THE Little Giant TRUCK.

Made of Malleable Iron.

Manufactured by The Barnes Mfg. Co., Mansfield, Ohio.

PATENTED.

Lifting and moving stoves, and other heavy articles, can be done with ease by using the Little Giant Truck. When folded down, it may be inserted under the stove, or other articles, then with one sweep of the handle a child can raise the burden, leaving it on wheels for easy removal. Indispensable for the store, shop or house. Space gained by setting the stove in the closet or in the corner when not in use. No need of extra help, no dirt or soiled clothes, sharp corners may be turned, handle is detachable. Grocers find it very convenient as a platform from which the contents of syrup and oil barrels may be drawn into measures.

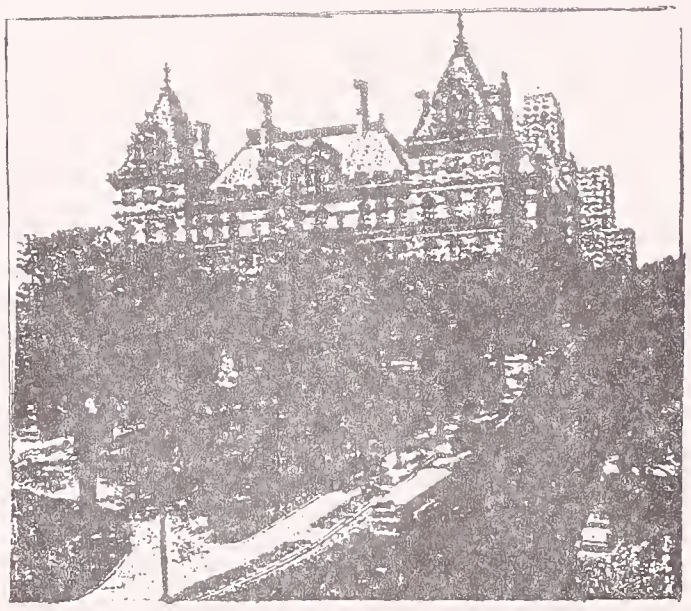
It is the cheapest and most powerful truck ever placed on the market, and can be used for more purposes with less labor than any truck made.

Price, complete ..... net, $5 00

WRITE FOR SPECIAL PRICES TO AGENTS.

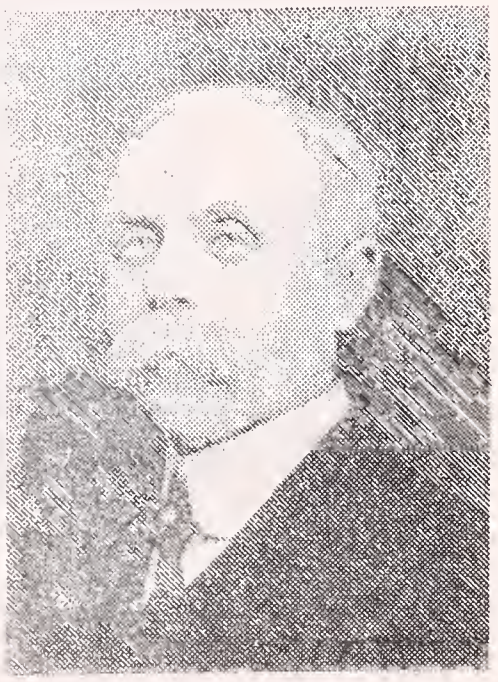
Here is a picture of the "Little Giant Truck" invented by Leon. As the advertising states you could move anything you could get it under. It was called a stove truck because it was handy in moving heating equipment in spring and fall. It helped in a dirty, awkward job.

Please do not, I repeat, do not, write for details as the circular suggests.



When Leon's grandchildren were kids they were much impressed that Grandfather Leon worked in such a grand, austere place as the State Capitol in Albany. See above, right. It is my guess that the Department which Leon supervised is now housed elsewhere in the Nelson A. Rockefeller Empire State Plaza. If you look closely at the following illustration, you can see the old State Capitol at the far right center, dwarfed by the newer buildings, but still proud, regal.

The Nelson A. Rockefeller Empire State Plaza completed.



LEON O. WISWELL

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Colonial Folly - The Yankee-Pennamite Wars

Introduction

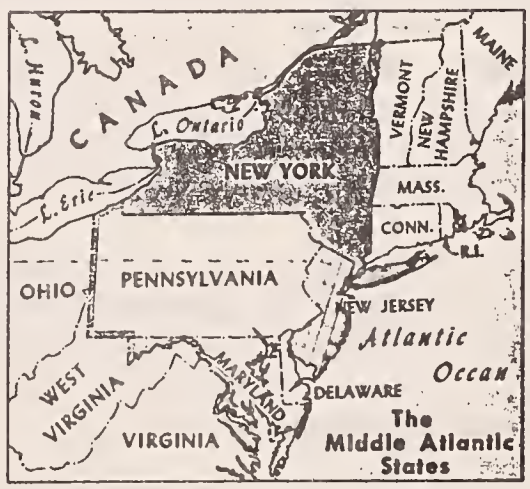
Did you ever hear of the Yankee-Pennamite Wars of 1769-1772, 1775 and 1784? Did you ever want to know something about them? I thought not. Do you really care about these wars now? Of course not. But they had bearing on the history of the Brown and Ingersoll families and deserve your momentary attention. Listen up!

Before the Revolution and for a while after it, the colonial governments of New York, Connecticut and Pennsylvania, the Bureau of Indian Affairs under Sir William Johnson, the British Parliament and several English Kings were involved in this on-again, off-again squabble, usually in opposition to one of the other parties. For years everyone fumbled with a Catch-22 situation, which arose from faulty geography, ambiguous language, greed and doubt as to who was boss.

There are mountains of tedious detail, some of it contradictory, all of it exceedingly dull. I'll spare you a recital of dates, places, advances, retreats, assertions and denials. Some people died, alas. There is no clear count but any is too many.

Colonial Charter Interpretations

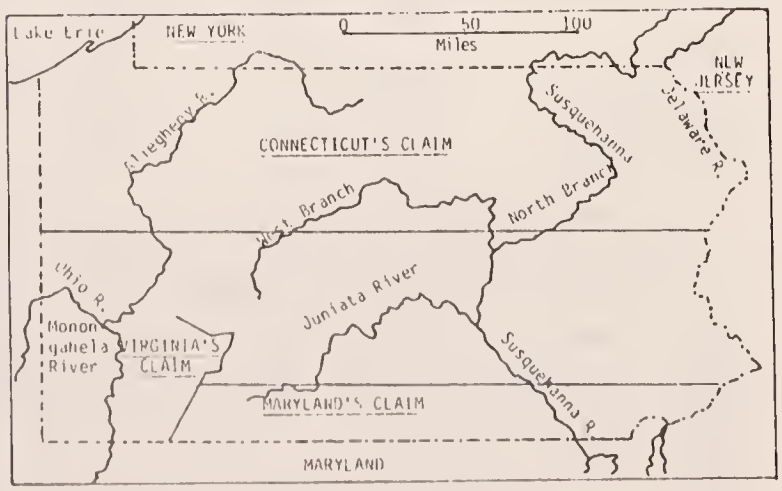
A 1662 royal charter granted by Charles II granted the Connecticut Colony all land lying between the 41st and 42nd parallels, from "Narragansett Bay on the east to the South Sea on the west", excepting the land which had been granted to others by previous charters. About 1750, a number of Connecticut business men and speculators decided that the charter language meant a strip about 70 miles wide stretching 2500 miles from the western border of New Jersey to the Pacific Ocean. The first map at the right illustrates that southeastern New York and northern New Jersey had been assigned.



Previously granted areas are shaded or cross-hatched

The second map demonstrates the claims of Connecticut, Maryland and Virginia on lands Pennsylvania called its own. Honoring these claims would strip the colony of its major cities and much of its resources. It's small wonder that they wanted no part of Connecticut in Pennsylvania.

The Connecticut connivers were primarily interested in the Wyoming Valley, about 23 miles long on both banks of the Susquehanna River - North Branch, to a width of 3 to 4 miles. This was "promised land", beautiful and fertile. The Susquehanna Company was organized as a stock company to buy the land from the Indians, colonize it and evangelize the natives. I wonder how much evangelizing they really planned to do after they drove the Indians out.



The proposed dismemberment of Colonial Pennsylvania

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Colonial Folly - The Yankee-Pennamite Wars

Comparison of Colonial Philosophies

Under the Susquehanna Company plan, each settler would eventually own what he could afford to buy. Pennsylvania Colony, however, followed the absentee landlord policy, with large grants to proprietors who retained title to the land and rented it to settlers, or sold off big blocks of land to other proprietors, etc.etc. Many Pennsylvania people strongly favored the Yankee idea.

Early Settlement-Early Fighting

The French and Indian War, which made the frontier a dangerous place, also united the colonists against a common enemy. After 1762, sparring began with occasional sharp jabs, but mostly mauling and pushing. Connecticut settlers moved into the disputed area with armed opposition, casualties, retreat, resettlement, arrest, imprisonment and return. The Yankees, stubborn, determined, sometimes beaten and roughed up, demonstrated that they had no intention of withdrawing permanently, and given the opportunity, retaliated fiercely.

Major John Durkee and Colonel Zebulon Butler were the military leaders of the New England contingent. You will recall these two Sons of Liberty from the apprehension of Jared Ingersoll in 1765 at Wethersfield, Conn, where 500 to 1 odds forced Jared to resign his Stamp Collector post. Zeb was only a captain then.

Revolution

Then, in 1776, the two opponents closed ranks again to fight a common enemy, and in 1778 the Wyoming Valley became bloodily involved in the fighting.

After the devastation of the Wyoming Valley, many people left and never returned, but many did, to pick up their old claims and their former lives. In 1784 there was a brief flurry of pushing and shoving and shooting and killing.

The Trenton Decree

Late in 1782 the Continental Congress appointed a 5-man commission to decide the question. After 41 days of hearing, the commission ruled that Connecticut's claim was without merit, but declared that any Yankee who had settled before the Trenton Decree could remain, subject to some payment to Pennsylvania. This and later legislation provided that Pennsylvania holders of title to land settled by Connecticut people, were entitled to compensation. They were given choice of land of equal value in western, unsettled Pennsylvania, or the equivalent in specie.

Nobody won!

Penn Yan

After the Revolution, pioneers from Connecticut and Pennsylvania founded a new town, at the head of Lake Keuka in Yates County, New York. They could not agree on a suitable name for the settlement. Some outsiders suggested Pang Yang and Pandemonium. These were treated with scorn. The New York Gazetteer of 1813 called the place Penn Yan (or Penn Yank). Fortunately the first name stuck, the other one was forgotten Penn Yan it is.

And it's a peaceful town. Lessons learned.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Butlers - Tories and Patriots

Introduction

The surname Butler appears often in 18th century history of the colonies (later states) of Pennsylvania and New York. There were Butlers in other colonies too, most of them beyond our ken.

Here are Butlers who somehow touched on the lives of Ingersolls, Browns and Weisers. The space allotted to each depends upon the nature and duration of that relationship or my knowledge of either. Oft times I may gossip about some characters more than is necessary; these are usually the most disreputable and, ergo, the more interesting. A couple of Butlers are included who are extraneous to our story; they are mentioned since they are sometimes confused with those who are important to it.

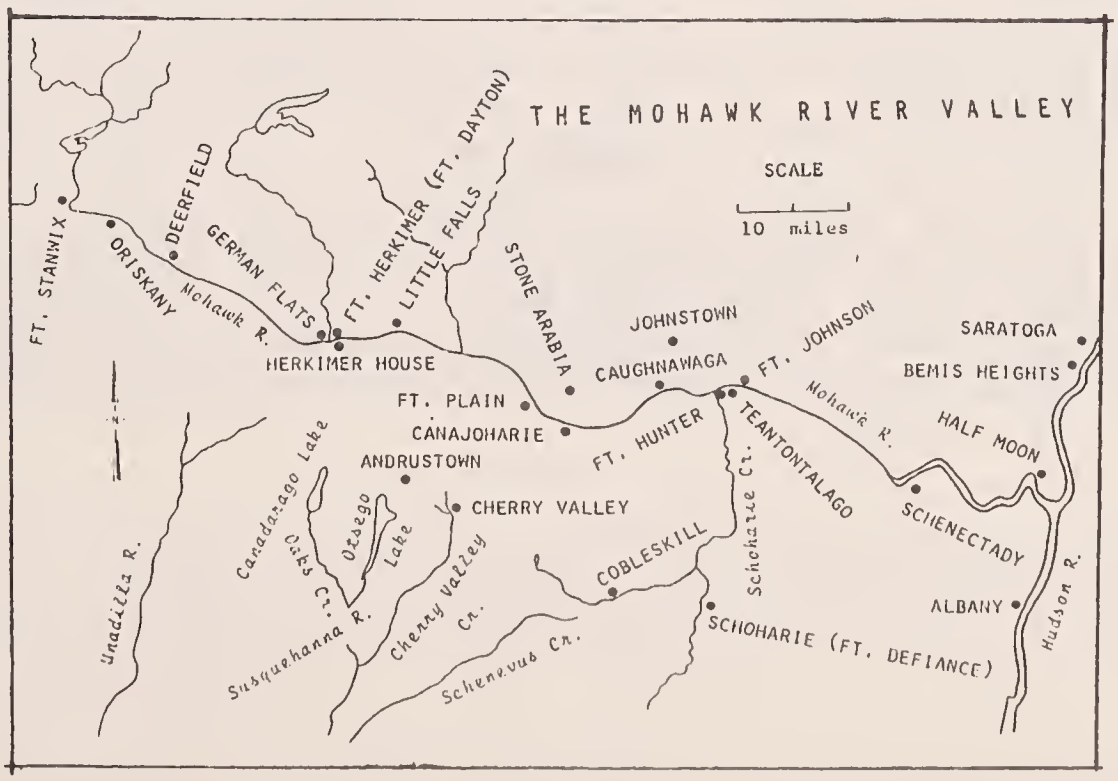
Note Regarding Sources

My research (here we go again) reveals that respectable historians confuse some Butlers, attribute deeds of one to another, disagree on dates, switch father and son, label men inconsistently with inaccurate military ranks and even identify a single picture as the likeness of two men, who are enemies. This would probably have rankled both of them had they ever seen it.

Butlers of different families are stated to be [cousins], [perhaps remotely related], [absolutely un-related in any way], [probably of common stock three generations back].

These resumés are not complete but provide enough data for identification or differentiation. I will not list all faults (of which there are many) or all virtues (which are scarce).

Location References



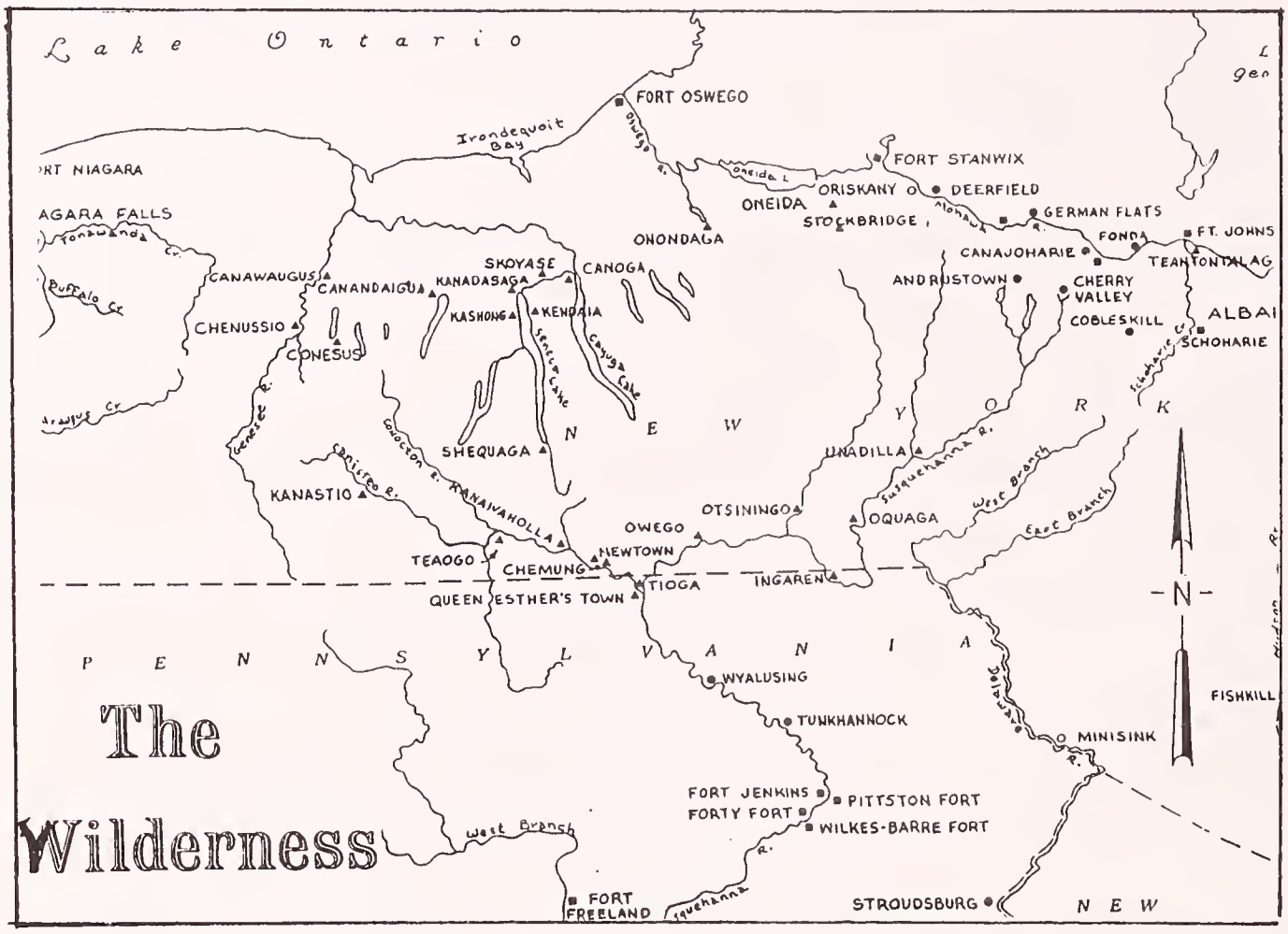
The map above, of the Mohawk Valley in the latter 1700's, shows the positions of the locales mentioned in the following texts. These places are still there but may now bear different names. Most of them are visible or accessible from the New York State Thruway.

Butlers - Tories and Patriots

Location References, continued

I've driven through this area countless times, intent on getting somewhere, without a thought for historical significance. I wish now that I had been more interested or observant. I'll forgive you if you are tired of me saying, "Too late smart!"

The map below provides an expanded view of the Mohawk Valley and of northeastern Pennsylvania, showing the Wyoming area and the Indian towns along the northern Susquehanna in New York.



Over a period of years the land depicted on these maps was traveled extensively (going and coming) by the men described here. Since the land was largely wooded it was not practicable to travel by horseback, and the few horses available were needed for farming or transport. Most movement was on foot over Indian paths or game trails. Canoes and rafts would be used when available and when streams were going in the right direction.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Butlers - Tories and Patriots

William Butler

William Butler was one of four military brothers of Carlisle, Pa. He was a Lt. Colonel in command of part of the 4th Pennsylvania Regiment of the Continental Line, quartered in Fort Defiance at Schoharie during the Revolution.

In retaliation for the attack on the Wyoming settlements in July, 1778, William Butler led a detachment of about 260 men southwest out of Fort Defiance on an expedition, October 6-9, 1778, to destroy Joseph Brant's village of Oquaga (Oghwaga), Tuscarora Town and Unadilla. These places were practically undefended since the warriors were themselves on the war path, killing white people elsewhere. The towns were wiped out. This was an early step in a continuing campaign to drive Brant, the Butlers and the descendants of Sir William Johnson out of the state. However, it angered the Indians and Brant used it as an excuse to attack Cherry Valley with Walter Butler later in the year.

William also participated in General Sullivan's campaign which led to the battle of Newtown in August, 1779. He retired from the army in 1783 because of poor health. He died in Pittsburgh in 1789.

There is a possibility that this William was a brother of Richard Butler, next following.

Richard Butler

Richard Butler was born April 1, 1743 in Dublin, Ireland, the son of Thomas and Eleanor (Parker) Butler. His family came to America and settled in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

Richard was an Indian trader and later an Indian agent but eventually he entered military service. He participated in the battles of Saratoga and Stony Point as an officer of Morgan's Rifles. After the Revolution he was appointed Superintendent for Indian Affairs for the Northern District. Later, as a Major General, he was named second in command of General Arthur St. Clair's expedition to Ohio in 1791, ostensibly to discipline the Miami Indians. The officers of St. Clair's staff were steamed by his appointment and appealed unsuccessfully to General Washington to rescind it. Butler then made a fool of himself by changing one of St. Clair's orders in his absence. This led indirectly to an ambush in which the force was badly ripped up. In a battle of November 4, 1792, Butler was mortally wounded and died on the battlefield. Two of his brothers were also in the battle, but survived.

William Butler

This William Butler was born December 17, 1759, the son of James and Mary (Simpson) Butler. He was a lieutenant of militia before he was of age and became a captain in 1781. In an early campaign of the Revolution, his father James and his brother James, Jr. were killed in an engagement at Cloud's Creek, S.C. with Loyalist forces led by "Bloody Bill" Cunningham.

In 1782 William gained at least partial revenge against Cunningham, surprising him, thrashing and dispersing his forces. The account doesn't mention whether "Bloody Bill" met his quietus there. William was a Major General of militia in the late 18th century. He was described as a tall, handsome man, a lover of horses. He died September 23, 1821.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Butlers - Tories and Patriots

Zebulon Butler

Zebulon Butler was born January 23, 1731 at Ipswich, Mass., the son of John and Hannah (Perkins) Butler and the grandson of Lt. William Butler of Ipswich. His parents settled in Lyme, Conn. in 1736 and Zeb spent his boyhood there. When old enough he engaged in the West Indies trade with some success, owning one or more sloops.

He served in the militia in the French and Indian War and rose to the rank of captain in 1760. Ordered to Cuba in 1762 he was ship-wrecked enroute but arrived in time to participate in the latter stages of the seige of Havana. You will recall that he appeared as a leading, and loud, Son of Liberty in the Wethersfield, Conn. mob that forced Jared Ingersoll to resign his position as Stamp Act Administrator in 1765.

As a civilian, Zeb led Connecticut settlers to the Wyoming Valley in Pennsylvania where they settled on land claimed by the Susquehanna Company by virtue of Connecticut's royal charter of 1662 and the gesture of purchasing the land from the Indians. They blythly ignored the claims of Pennsylvania to the same land. In the ensuing Pennamite Wars between Pennsylvania and Connecticut settlers, Butler drove the Pennsylvanians from Fort Wyoming in 1771 and repulsed Colonel Plunket's invasion of the valley at Nanticoke Gap in 1775.

Internal strife was placed on the back-burner at the beginning of the Revolution. Many Wyoming people enlisted in the Continental Army, including Zebulon who was made a Colonel in view of his experience. He was on furlough at Wyoming in July 1778 at the time John Butler and his Royal Rangers, Sir John Johnson's Royal Greens and several hundred Indians attacked the valley and the forts in it.

Zeb and his second in command, Colonel Nathan Denison, urged the people to wait for reinforcements which were known to be on the way. Several hot heads in the garrison, over-confident to the point of absurdity, urged that they march out and attack the invaders. Butler and Denison weakened in resolve under calls of cowardice, and agreed on the foolhardy measure. The rest is history, the Tories and Indians tore them apart, overwhelmed them, confused them, screamed them into terror, submission and death. Most of the hot heads had been cooled off by a very short haircut, Indian style.

Somehow Zebulon and his family escaped by night flight to Wilkes-Barre. More of this elsewhere.

In 1781 Butler was assigned to West Point where he remained until after the war, when he retired from the army. He was married three times, respectively, to Anna Ford (1760), Lydia Johnson (1775) and Phebe Haight (1781). He had children by each of his wives. He died in Wilkes-Barre in 1795.

Butlers - Tories and Patriots

Walter Butler (The First Walter)

Walter Butler (John's father, not his son) was a resident of Connecticut in 1733, married to Deborah Butler, with a five-year-old son John. He was Irish, claiming descent from a younger son of one of the Dukes of Ormonde.

When Palatine pioneers from Livingston Manor were induced to settle in the Mohawk Valley in 1725-26, Fort Hunter was built to protect them. It was erected on the east bank of the Schoharie River at its juncture with the Mohawk River. Captain Walter Butler of the British Army was transferred from Connecticut to command the new fort.

Almost immediately Walter displayed his method of operation. He spent an afternoon with Governor Cosby of New York in Albany and obtained the Governor's approval of a parchment manuscript he had devised. He then invited the Indian chiefs and sachems of Teantontalago (the surrounding territory) to a three-day "feast of brotherhood" at the fort, all expenses paid. Just as he had planned it, this feast, featuring rum on tap, degenerated into a happy three-day drunken brawl.

At a strategic moment Walter produced his parchment manuscript and asked each of the pie-eyed chiefs to sign it. Someone held each of them up until he could squiggle his tribe totem at the bottom of the document.

This piece of skull-duggery granted to Walter 186,000 acres of the Indians' lands at the juncture of the two rivers. I don't know how much rum was needed or how much it cost, but Walter certainly got a bargain, or should I say, a real steal.

With all this territory at hand, Walter decided there was room enough and he brought his family from Connecticut in 1742, including John, now fourteen.

A large part of these "rum-soaked" acres were parcelled out to Irish and Scotch immigrants; at a price, of course. In 1775, 5000 acres were left in the possession of son John. He had erected a rambling two-storied house overlooking the Mohawk near the site of the present Fonda - then Caughnawaga. He called his house Butlersbury. That figures.

John Butler

John Butler, son of Walter and Deborah, was born in 1728 in New London, Connecticut. We have previously recited how he came to New York and lived at Butlersbury, just a few miles south of Johnstown.

Early on, John became a friend, admirer and agent of William Johnson. From 1755 on he was active on missions demonstrating his ability to gain and keep the confidence of the Indians and to lead men in battle. In these activities he was commanded by Johnson himself, Abercromby and Bradstreet.

After Johnson's death and the outbreak of the Revolution, he remained strongly committed to the British cause. This forced him out of the Mohawk Valley and he retreated to Canada with his son Walter, hoping, of course, for British victory and a return to his extensive possessions. His wife and younger children were held as hostages in Albany.

Butlers- Tories and Patriots

John Butler, continued

Assigned to Niagara by Sir Guy Carleton, he recruited Tory sympathizers to form Butler's Rangers. These, along with Sir John Johnson's Royal Greens and the Indians led by Joseph Brant, formed a formidable fighting force which became the scourge of eastern New York and north-eastern Pennsylvania.

John was described as a short, rather fat man, very active, often short of breath, who tended to repeat words in his speech when excited. His expression was one of seriousness, but not unpleasant. In action he was decisive, firm and brave.

The Butlers, John and Walter, his son, John Johnson and Brant gained reputations as merciless, bloody butchers, committing atrocities by the dozen. They were said, too, to have encouraged their Indian allies to outdo the worst of the whites in scalping and torturing. The extent to which this reputation was earned is difficult to determine. There is no doubt these men had blood on their hands, but war is not war without blood. Frightening foes is a legitimate weapon. Modern opinion, backed by research, is that early historians stretched realities into fictional recitals. Later scholarship (absent the hot hate of participants or survivors) has proven some bloody stories to be false, grossly exaggerated or wholly imaginary.

We must also bear in mind that patriot fighters or soldiers were not without blame. They too committed some rather nasty deeds in the heat of battle. The scorched earth policy of General John Sullivan's campaign following Brant's defeat at Newtown condemned many an Indian to starvation and exposure without shelter in bitter weather. They resented this. Wouldn't you?

Butler's Rangers were disbanded in 1784; most of them moved to Canada, as did John. He was appointed His Majesty's Commissioner for Indian Affairs at Niagara and was an honored and esteemed subject of his King. He received a grant of land and a pension from the British Government.

He and his wife Catherine had several children, of whom Walter N. was the eldest. John died at Niagara in May, 1796 and is buried there.

John Butler and his family were quite intimate with the Johnson family prior to the death of Sir William. While the Butlers were devout churchmen and no doubt had serious misgivings about his promiscuity, they prudently kept their mouths shut. Evidently the Johnson-Butler friendship dwindled and died after Sir William's passing.

Walter N. Butler

Walter Butler was born at Caughnawaga (Fonda) near Johnstown in the Mohawk Valley, the eldest child of John and Catherine Butler and the grandson of Walter and Deborah (Perkins) Butler.

He was studying law in Albany at the outbreak of the Revolution, but fled with his father and the Johnsons to Canada. In 1777 he was ensign in the British Army of General St. Leger as it terrorized the Mohawk Valley settlements. Walter was very active in recruiting for Butler's Rangers.

Butlers - Tories and Patriots

Walter N. Butler, continued

With a squad of about 15 Royal Greens, Walter came to German Flats on August 12, 1777. They commandeered the house of a Loyalist named Shoemaker and disguised themselves as farmers. He sent Shoemaker's sons into the neighborhood to announce a series of enlistment rallies. A large group of neighborhood residents, originally neutral but disgusted and angered by the massacre at Oriskany and by Walter's arrogant attitude, banded together, surrounded Shoemaker's house, shot down the posted sentries and arrested the whole bunch as spies. They were held in a local jail until August 21, 1777 when troops commanded by Benedict Arnold and Marinus Willett arrived and held a court martial. Walter was sentenced to be hung. At the intercession of some officers who had known Walter, he was reprieved but was still held in prison. From here on the story reads like a dime (nickel) novel. Walter pleaded illness and General Lafayette (of all people) arranged to have him placed in a private home, under guard. This home happened to be that of a Tory sympathizer. Walter escaped by eluding the conveniently inebriated sentinels. The power of rum. Tsk! Tsk! Dumb!

On November 11, 1778, Walter, a real toad, led an attack by Rangers and Brant and his Mohawks on Cherry Valley, where the attackers tried to outdo their valiant deeds at Wyoming and Oriskany. Every one connected with this raid earned and deserved a reputation as a merciless, needlessly cruel villain who hurt for fun. Walter, expressing amazement at the things that had happened, wrote to patriot Generals Peter Schuyler and James Clinton indicating he was blameless. He said the Indians did it all. This was generally considered to be a crock of crap. His father had used the same plea after Wyoming but most people, even witnesses, agreed that John attempted to restrain the Indians at Wyoming. No one thought Walter did. There is a story that even John scolded Walter for his wanton savagery.

In this raid Walter took many captives which he exchanged in 1779 for his mother and her younger children, who had been held hostage in Albany.

I have found no description of Walter's physical appearance, but he was said to be morose, vindictive, given to strong passionate outbursts.

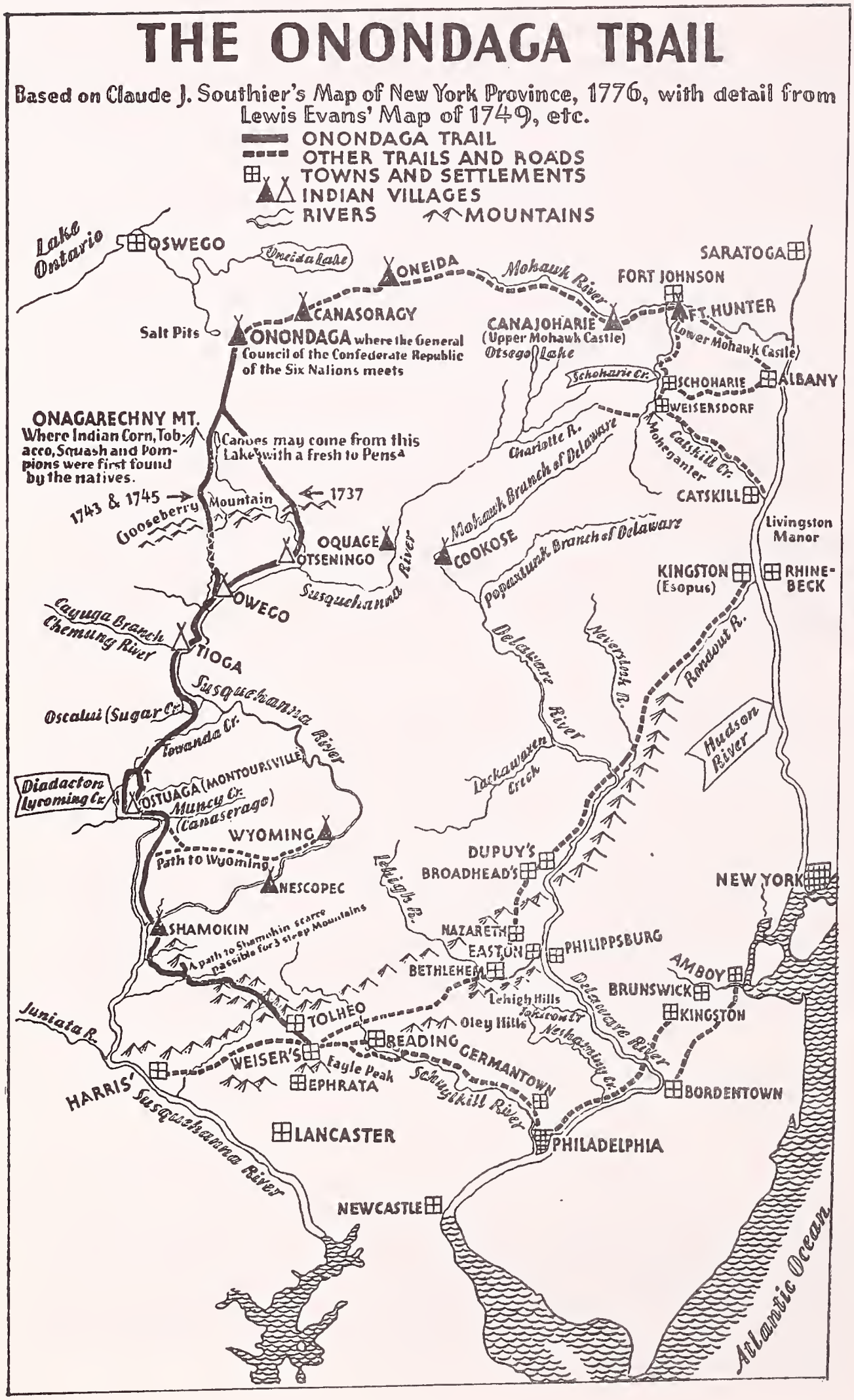
On October 24, 1781 Walter accompanied another raid on the Mohawk Valley which was repulsed by forces under the command of Marinus Willett. Butler was in charge of a detachment assigned to cover the retreat of the main force under Major John Ross. In crossing West Canada Creek [Mud Creek] in a fog, Walter was [shot from the opposide bank by pursuing Continental scouts] [shot, wounded and scalped by an Oneida Indian] [killed by a rifle ball through the head, aimed at him from an extreme distance] [shot down by an Oneida]. Whatever way, a good job!

Some stories state that a Wintermoot, one of the traitors of Wyoming, was killed at the same time as Walter. Applause!

Conrad Weiser

There is ample evidence in the literature of the period that Conrad Weiser and William Johnson were contemporaries who knew each other, mutually respectful but cautiously suspicious. Their principal value to early America came from their ability to understand Indians, to gain their confidence, to influence them. Conrad, a sort of moral stick-in-the mud, deplored Sir William's sexual high-jinks. They probably did not get to know each other well enough to work together constructively. Conrad had exchanges of correspondence with Johnson and with the Butlers as well.

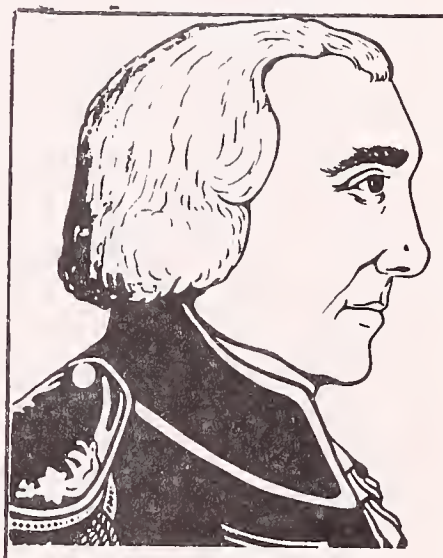
Butlers - Tories and Patriots



Reference Bonus

The very interesting map at the left will help the reader place the events described.

The two pictures reproduced below will demonstrate the fallibility of those who would be historians.



Zebulon Butler

Colonel John Butler of Butler's Rangers.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Some Secords

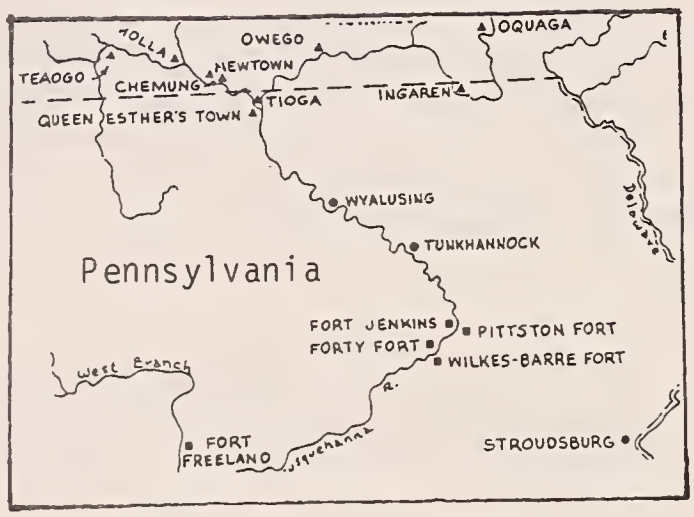
Why?

Members of the Secord family became involved in small ways in the history of the Browns and Ingersolls. I have found very little information about them. Here it is.

Secords In Pennsylvania

John Secord, Sr., of Huguenot descent, evidently lived in Connecticut Colony and in the Hudson Valley before his appearance in Pennsylvania. He had three sons, John, Jr., Cyrus and James. With a Pennsylvania claim they settled first on Monadnock, the largest of a group of narrow islands in the Susquehanna between Forty Fort and Fort Jenkins. Later they moved to the west bank opposite Tunkhannock.

Soon after the outbreak of the Revolution, John was accused of helping several British officers and their servants who had escaped from a Lebanon, Connecticut jail. John was said to have entertained them and outfitted them for the long trip to Niagara. He was arrested and complained bitterly to Congress that his rights had been violated. Congress ordered his release.



Parts of Pennsylvania and New York

In 1777 John and his family, well aware of the suspicions that he was a Tory and recognizing that he had been lucky so far, felt that he would be more comfortable at Tioga Point. He moved to Athens village there, built a log house and established a farm.

Participation in the Wyoming Valley Fighting

There is ample evidence that Secord and his sons participated in Indian and Tory raids and atrocities against outlying patriot settlements along the Susquehanna in early 1778. A story has survived to the effect that Cyrus befriended one patriot woman and her children, in defiance of his father's orders. This has an interesting denouement which I'll reveal in a moment.

I have seen no direct inference that Secords participated actively in the so-called Wyoming Massacre but it seems unlikely that they did not. Peer pressure would probably have forced them to make gestures if nothing else.

When Butler and his Rangers and Johnson with his Loyal Greens, still bloody and gloating, passed through Tioga about July 8, 1778 on their way back to Niagara, John Secord packed up his family and went with them. A wise choice. He would have been a prime target for angry, vengeful patriots.

Post War

Now the rest of our little story for which you have been waiting with bated breath. After the war, John Secord and his sons came back to the area, prepared to re-settle in Franklin Flats at Wysox. They had a deed for the property but there is no record of it in local archives. Their presence was severely discouraged. The elder Secord was horse-whipped by Sebastian Strophe, the returned husband of the woman to whom John Secord had denied flour for her children.

Some Secords

Post War, continued

Strophe invited Cyrus Secord, who had supplied flour to Mrs. Strophe on the sly, to stay as friend and neighbor. The story says that John, stinging from the whip, accepted his "notice to quit" and left. Cyrus stayed, welcome.

Someone else may have made this up, but I did not. I swear it.

Laura Ingersoll (85 W - Chart J - 6th Generation)

Laura was born in December 1775 at Great Barrington and moved to Ontario in 1793 with her father Thomas Ingersoll. Somewhere in Canada, probably soon after 1793, she married James Secord, who was born June 7, 1773 and died February 22, 1841.

This James, was the son of James and Madelaine (Badeau) Secord of New Rochelle, New York, and the grandson of John Secord, Sr. While old John and his son James were fighting their wars elsewhere, Madelaine and 3-year-old James were refugees in Niagara. All of these Secords became Canadians.

Somewhere in these papers, there is an essay about Laura Secord and her place in history. Watch for it!

The Battle Of Wyoming

Compiler's Prologue

Patient reader, I admit an occasional tendency to exaggerate, but I am a novice compared with well-known historians of the Battle of Wyoming. I read many descriptions of this grisly affair. Some dismiss it in a few vague sentences, a cheap cop-out. Most agree on sites and dates and correctly identify good guys and bad guys. [One fellow places Forty-Fort on the site of Wilkes-Barre; Wilkes Barre is on the east bank of the Susquehanna at the mouth of Mill Creek. Forty-Fort is on the west bank of river, several miles north.] [Another fought the battle on July 3, 1776, two years early; someone else fought it on July 5, 1778, two days late.]

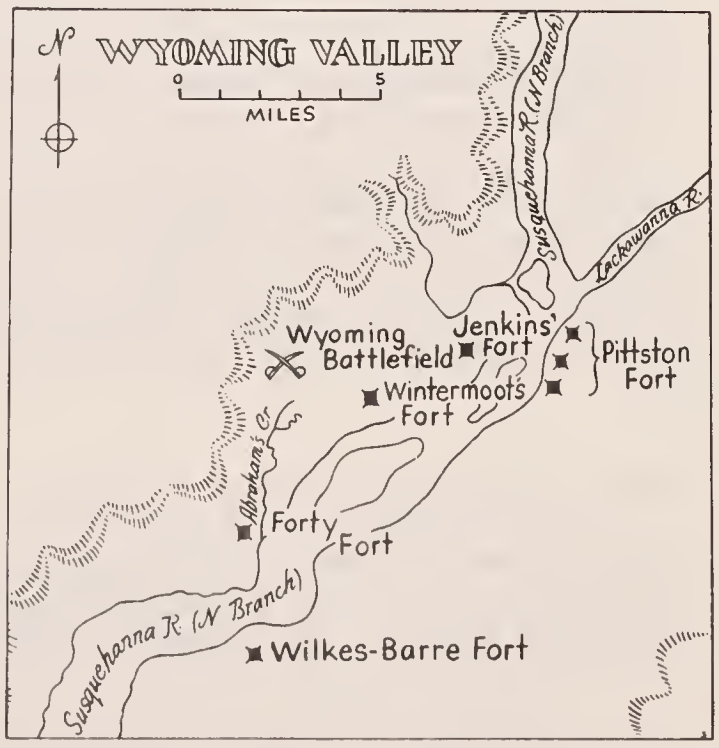
Lazy writers, impatient of research, copied the mistakes of others, perpetuating and proliferating error. I'll present what I think to be a reasonable and likely narrative; I'll show only the most amusing or grotesque of the alternatives offered.

To avoid cluttering the story with intermittent flash-back description of participants I'll use preliminary paragraphs to introduce Daniel Ingersoll, Thomas Brown and Queen Esther Montour. Earlier segments of this archive covered the Butlers, John and Zebulon, Sir John Johnson, Joseph Brant and the Secords. The Yankee-Pennamite Wars, previously summarized, account for the presence of so many Connecticut Yankees in Pennsylvania.

The Valley

Wyoming is a political entity in which Wilkes-Barre is located, a township of the Connecticut ilk. The fort at Wilkes-Barre is sometimes called Fort Wyoming. And the name is used to denote the whole valley, and, alas, to label the battle and its aftermath.

The Wyoming Valley, a fertile garden spot, had been supplying Washington's Continental Army with all of its produce beyond the need for seed and the appetites of the occupants. A few months before the fracas, they had sent 3000 bushels of wheat to the army. In July, 1778, the current planting of grains was ripening nicely, as were those of fruit, root vegetables, hemp, and flax; the live stock herds were reproducing and fattening.



Normally there were about 5000 settlers living in the Valley, but 1000 men had left to join the Continental Army and were serving at distant posts.

The settlers were aware of the imminent dangers and most of the outlying farms had been abandoned. Many chose to close up shop and leave the area entirely, moving to the east, south or southwest toward less vulnerable sections of Penn's Colony, or even back to Connecticut proper.

The Battle Of Wyoming

The Valley, continued

Even Sunbury residents packed up and retreated eastward. June 1778 was called The Great Runaway. Those remaining were urged to come to the stockades for a little more safety. Many did but there were still die-hards, and often they did, falling to the tomahawks of small Seneca chop-and-run war parties.

As an army granary the Valley was a legitimate military target and was particularly tempting to the British since its ability to defend itself had been drastically weakened. And the ripening crops could not be left for harvest, they must be denied the patriot army.

Participation of the Ingersoll Family

Daniel Ingersoll (28 H - Chart I - 4th Generation) was born about 1739 in Westchester County, New York, the son of John and Hannah Ingersoll. Daniel went to the Wyoming Valley about 1762 as a Susquehanna Company settler. He was accompanied by his younger brother Benjamin, who became a Sergeant in the Continental Army and was serving on another front in July, 1778.

Daniel's two sons, James and Daniel, were probably born in 1762 and 1764, respectively. They were at Wyoming in 1778 and were living in Pennsylvania and New York long after the Revolution.

Daniel was known throughout the Valley. It is apparent that his holdings were near Fort Wintermoot. War parties were raiding the outlying farms in early 1777 and in one such raid, the Indians captured Daniel and took him to Queen Esther's Town. He was held for some time since, in that same year a Colonel Jenkins and a James Sutton visited Queen Esther's Town to negotiate his release.

There are no details of his captivity, but he had been released and was living on his holdings in Exeter Township on July 1, 1778. Descriptions of Daniel's activities on July 3, which appear later, allude to his bitter hatred of the British and Indians, probably deepened by memories of his recent treatment while their prisoner.

Daniel and his family survived the summer of 1778. He was active in the Valley for many years. Daniel (or his son Daniel) was a member of Captain John Franklin's company of militia in May, 1780, as was Ezekiel Brown, son of "our" Thomas Brown. The younger Ingersoll would then have been 16, young Ezekiel 17. Just the age for colonial soldiering. Of course, old Daniel would have been only 41. It could have been he.

Participation of the Brown Family

Thomas Brown IV was a great-great-grandson of Nicholas and Elizabeth Brown who emigrated from England in 1630 and settled in Lynn, Massachusetts. Three of Nick's and Lizzie's grandsons moved to Stonington, Connecticut about 1690, including Thomas IV's grandfather, Thomas II.

Thomas IV was born in Stonington in 1717. He was a seafarer but abandoned the sea because of a bad leg and severe arthritis brought on by constant shipboard exposure to bad weather. He first came to Wyoming with a group of Susquehanna Company pioneers in 1754. He established a Valley land claim but did not remain since the area was still wild and thinly occupied. With his growing family he moved from Connecticut to Quaker Ridge in Dutchess County, New York and thence to Wilkes-Barre in 1776.

The Battle Of Wyoming

Participation of the Brown Family, continued

FGA indicates that Thomas's first wife was Hannah Spooner, his second Patricia Brockway. David Crafts, in his History of Bradford County, Pennsylvania 1770-1878 states that Thomas's first wife was Deborah Holdich with whom he lived for 12 years without issue. Presumably Deborah died and he married Harriet Spooner. This may explain why Thomas was 42 when his first child, Betty, was born. Stonington records indicate that Crafts was right about Deborah but spelled her maiden name incorrectly. Evidently it should read Holdridge. Spell it whichever way you like!

In 1778, infirm, Thomas could not help defend the fort but left with a neighbor's family, his wife and his children except Thomas V who was a militiaman. The others were on foot but Thomas rode a horse, apparently unable to walk. The group fled first to Catawissa (Catawessy) down river toward Sunbury, and then northeast in a semi-circular route to Goshen, New York, where his daughter, Mrs. Thomas Rowley lived.

Historians do not question Thomas's physical problems. Note that he had 13 children after he left the sea, the youngest born in 1784, when he was 67.

Thomas V was killed in the battle on July 3 or in fleeing from it. Another Brown was also killed. Both of these names appear on the monument. It is said that John was a younger brother of Thomas V, but no record supports this. Another Brown family lived in the Valley and held one of the small stockaded forts near Pittston, called Brown's Fort. Could John have been of this family? There were three Browns, James, David and Moses listed as members of Captain Simon Spaulding's Wilkes-Barre militia. None of these was related to Thomas IV as far as I know. A Brown also appeared on a list of Tories living in the Valley.

Thomas IV and Patricia had a son Collins who was barely three at the time of the battle and died on July 5 during the flight to Catawissa.

The History of Wyoming by Charles Miner, published in 1845, gives this story of the fate of Thomas V. He had participated in the advance on July 3 and retreated, with a companion, to the river bank. According to the companion, they had almost reached the east bank when Thomas was induced to return to the west bank by promises of life and good treatment. He fell for this line of crap, recrossed the river and walked up the bank to be greeted by three inches of tomahawk in his skull. He was only 18, but certainly not bright. His companion, smarter, continued to the east bank and lived to tell.

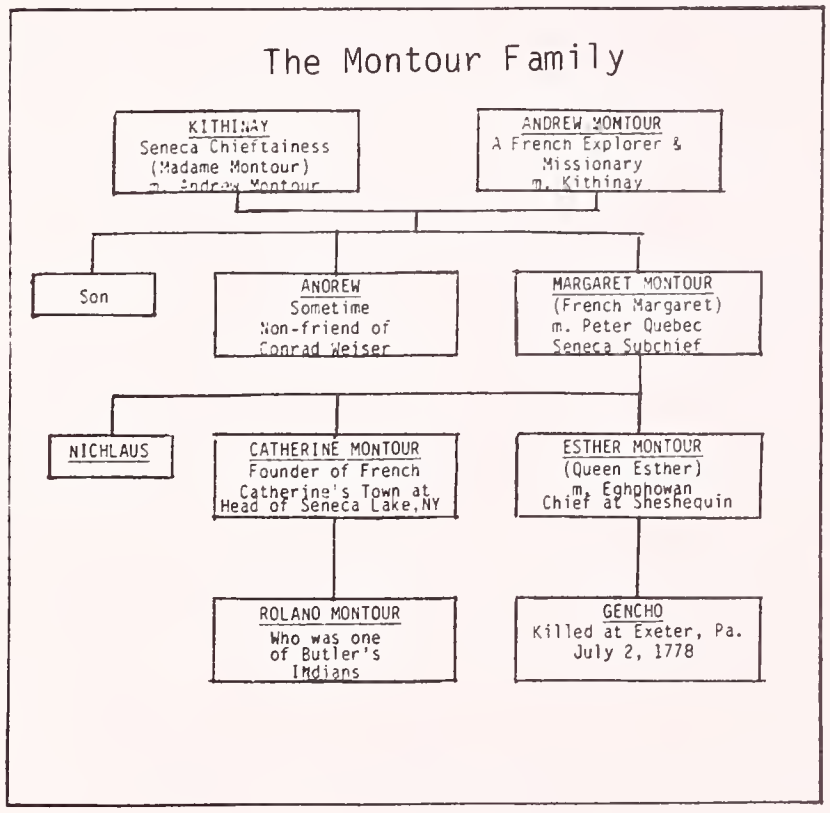
Queen Esther, The Witch of Wyoming

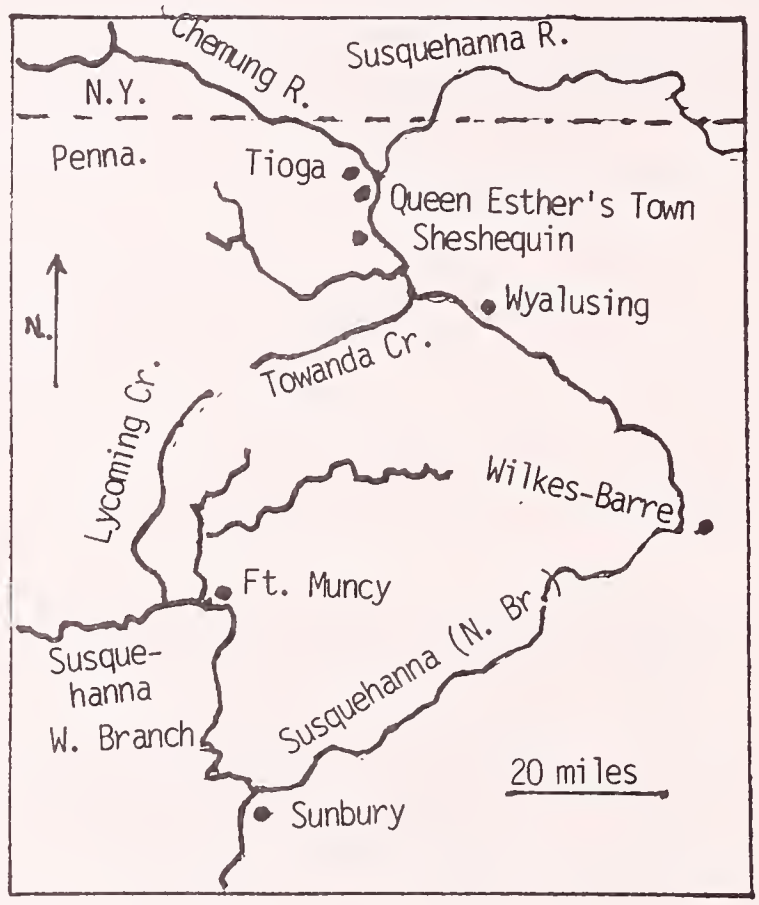
Perhaps the most striking but revolting figure of this nasty business in Wyoming in July, 1778 was an Indian woman. Esther Montour, known as Queen Esther, was part French, part Indian, of some standing among the Seneca, the League of the Iroquois and even the white community. On July 3, 1778 she acquired the name of Witch of Wyoming. If you read along, you'll agree with me that she should have been called much worse than that. And those "braves" who helped her and applauded what she did, were no better than the droppings of the dogs they had eaten. A pox on them all!

The Battle Of Wyoming

Queen Esther, The Witch of Wyoming, continued

Here are a chart and a map which outline Esther's origins and lay out the territory in which she lived.





Catherine and Esther, the daughters of French Margaret (see chart), proud of their French blood, used the surname Montour, as did their mother and grandmother. Conrad Weiser knew and respected the grandmother Kithinay, Madame Montour. Margaret founded a village at the juncture of the Chemung and Susquehanna Rivers, a bit south of Tioga Point.

Esther was tall, handsome, full-breasted, with a fine figure and facial features reflecting her French blood. She bore herself proudly and regally, which earned her the nickname Queen Esther. She liked this, did not resent it. After her mother Margaret died of small-pox, the town she founded became Queen Esther's town, and she ran it, regally.

Roland Montour, Esther's nephew, joined John Butler's expedition as it crossed the New York lake region, Wyoming bound. At Tioga Point, Esther's son Gencho was an eager recruit.

As they left Tioga, Esther joined them, not as a combatant, but to observe her son in his first big fight. (I wonder what the other young warriors thought of Esther's motherly role.)

The Battle Of Wyoming

Queen Esther, The Witch of Wyoming, continued

On July 2, 1778, Gencho was mortally wounded in a light skirmish with Wyoming scouts in Exeter Township. Esther took this very hard and vowed bloody vengeance. Roland said afterwards that she seemed to become physically possessed as she watched Gencho die. [A careless historian attributed all of these actions to Catherine Montour (also known as Queen Esther).] Tsk! Tsk!

Esther's weapon was described as a bludgeon [knife] [spear] [tomahawk] [club] [death maul]. It was said that she brained her victims [knived them] [speared them] [tomahawked them] [cut off their heads].

Listen up! Esther, at dusk on July 3, 1778, had her Indians bring 16 male prisoners captured that afternoon, to a point a half-mile east of the battlefield. Here a flat-topped rock, 4 or 5 feet square, protruded two feet above the ground. Esther was ready for her act, wearing only a loin cloth and war paint and sweat. The prisoners were arranged in a circle [some say in single file], seated around a fire [some do not mention it], each held by two braves, while about 200 Indians formed an audience-perimeter.

At Esther's signal, a prisoner was dragged to the rock, forced to sit on the ground before it. His head was pushed back flat against the rock, his eyes to the sky. And then she let him have it in the forehead, spattering brains, bone, blood and flesh, while she screamed in triumph. Then she sang a song, danced a small jig, and selected her next client. Three prisoners fought loose; one was caught and brought back, the other two escaped. The rock became Bloody Rock. And she the bitch of it.

Queen Esther boasted of her butchery the next day, waving her bloody weapon at the miserable defenders at the surrender. "... with the scalps of her fourteen victims dangling on a long string from her hand, the bells of her pantalettes a-jingle beneath her knee-length skirt, strutted the tall erect Queen Esther, her son's death avenged." Can you believe that? I can believe strutting and scalps, but pantalettes? With bells yet?

I found no record of Esther's presence after July 5, 1778. I suppose she returned to her village when Butler returned to Niagara. In September 1778, a punitive expedition led by Colonel Hartley destroyed Queen Esther's Town, burning the 70 houses in it. Unluckily she wasn't in any of them. It is interesting to speculate that she fell into a latrine and was smothered to death.

The Ingersolls at Fort Wintermoot

On July 1, 1778, Daniel Ingersoll [David] and his wife (no name available) left their isolated farm and went to Fort Wintermoot along with the other Exeter area families. When word came that the British were near, Daniel began to clean his musket and his wife found a pitch-fork for a weapon. Helmut Wintermoot [Wintermot] then revealed his true character and told Ingersoll that Butler was welcome there and that Daniel, his wife and children were prisoners and should conduct themselves accordingly. Imagine Daniel's red-faced, seething rage and his efforts to control it.

Later, Daniel appears again. How the Ingersolls survived I do not know but they did. They were tough resilient people, probably living on the bitter bile of their anger and hate.

The Battle Of Wyoming

Pre-Battle Comment

The story of the battle follows anon, but please read it with the following information in mind.

About 300 militiamen were actively engaged for 45 minutes on July 3, before they were routed. From the descriptions available I would guess that each man fired his musket about 9 times during that interval. Ergo - about 2700 musket balls were directed against the enemy in that time. After the battle John Butler announced his losses as 3 killed and 8 wounded, a total of 11 casualties. Eleven hits out of 2700 shots, one hit every 245 firings. Hit average - less than one-half of one percent. I think Butler deliberately understated his casualties. Nevertheless, no patriot earned a marksmanship medal that day.

The Invaders

The British forces were made up of:

John Butler's Rangers. He was probably a Colonel. Occasionally he is called [Major], and once or twice [Sir John]. Biased British accounts think he earned a knighthood in July 1778, but the English people were horrified by the cruelties imputed by the media. The Crown demurred, since it would have seemed a reward for wanton cruelty.

Sir John Johnson (Sir William's son) and a contingent of his Royal Greens.

Unattached Tories enlisted or recruited for this campaign, including some renegades and the net work of spies already in the Valley.

Seneca Indians and some Cayugas and a few others under the command of a noted Seneca Chief Gucingeracton.

John Butler

The number of men under British arms was reported (in 20 sources) as few as 574 and as many as 1600. The portion of the total made up of Indian allies varied from 19% to 86%, depending on what you read and believed.

A reasonable figure, quoted by many, was 1100, of whom 700 were Indians.

There were writers who insisted that Joseph Brant was present and especially vicious. These claims have been proven false. Others stated that Walter Butler led the Rangers rather than his father. This is not true. Walter was in a patriot prison in Albany at the time. Sir John Johnson may or may not have been there, but some of his Royal Greens were. The Rangers and Royal Greens were all equipped, trained and uniformed by the Crown.

The Battle Of Wyoming

The Defenders

The Patriot fighting force was made up of:

> About 60 men designated as "regulars." These were so classified only because their enlistment was authorized after the main body of enlisted men had left the Valley for service elsewhere.
>
> Approximately 300 militiamen, presumably older boys, older men and those with minor infirmities.
>
> "Reformadoes", all older or ill men, fit only for emergency fort duty.

The total force was anywhere between 260 and 582, your choice. Colonel Zebulon Butler [he was John's cousin] [he was not John's cousin], a Continental Army Colonel, was on furlough in Wyoming [detached for special service]. Colonel Nathan Denison [Dennison] was the local militia colonel who agreed that Zebulon should have overall command.

Among the militia was a hothead named Lazarus Stewart, who had been in the area for a long time and had been , with the infamous Paxton Boys, involved in the slaughter of two groups of Moravian Mission Indians, mostly old men, women and children. He had been outlawed elsewhere in Pennsylvania as an undesirable. He was disliked in Wyoming too, considered to be a brave but rash man, mean, unpredictable, vindictive, an Indian hater, not too bright.

Dispatches had been sent to General Washington and Congress stressing the urgent need for reinforcement. An answer was slow in coming but it was known that two companies were en route, two days away on July 3.

Spies and Renegades

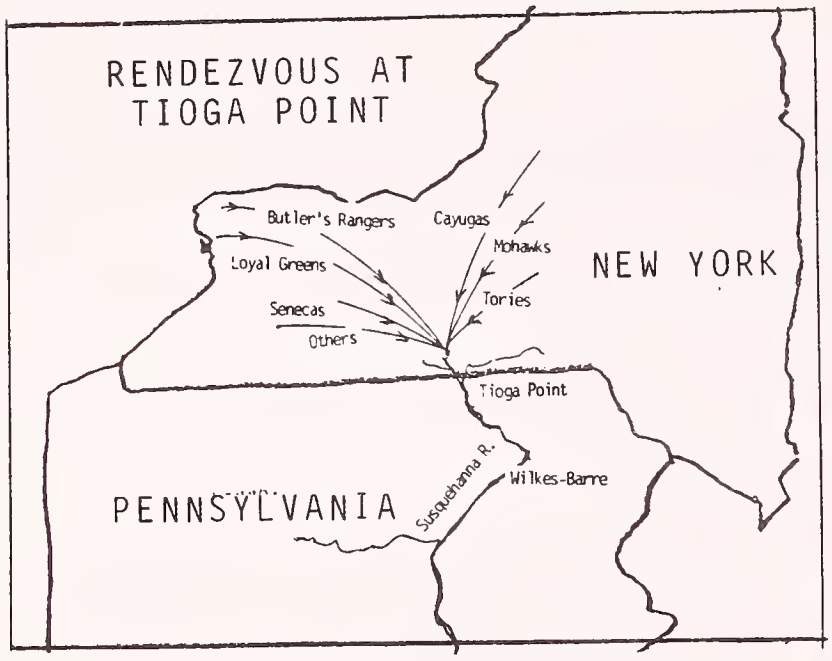
Many Tory spies still lived in the Valley, suspect or not. These furnished information to the British, secretly destroyed property or stole supplies. Some of these characters had been arrested in January 1778 and 18 of them had been sent to Connecticut under guard. The others were released, charges not proven. These and others remained, intent on revenge on their erstwhile neighbors or even members of their own families. The Wintermoots and the Secords were there, and even a suspected Brown (not "ours"). Wintermoot drove a small herd of cattle into the hills to feed Butler's army soon after it landed at Bowman's Creek.

Preparation For Invasion

The attack on Wyoming was carefully planned and well executed. It was a complete British military victory, deprived the Continental Army of desperately needed supplies and demonstrated that John Butler, despite criticism, was an able frontier soldier. True, he had superior numbers, but he brought them 200 miles in fighting trim and the defenders handed him, on a silver platter, what he thought would require much bitter fighting. The Indians fought well and in their tradition of fighting - a dead enemy was a good enemy - a scalp was a cherished symbol and reward.

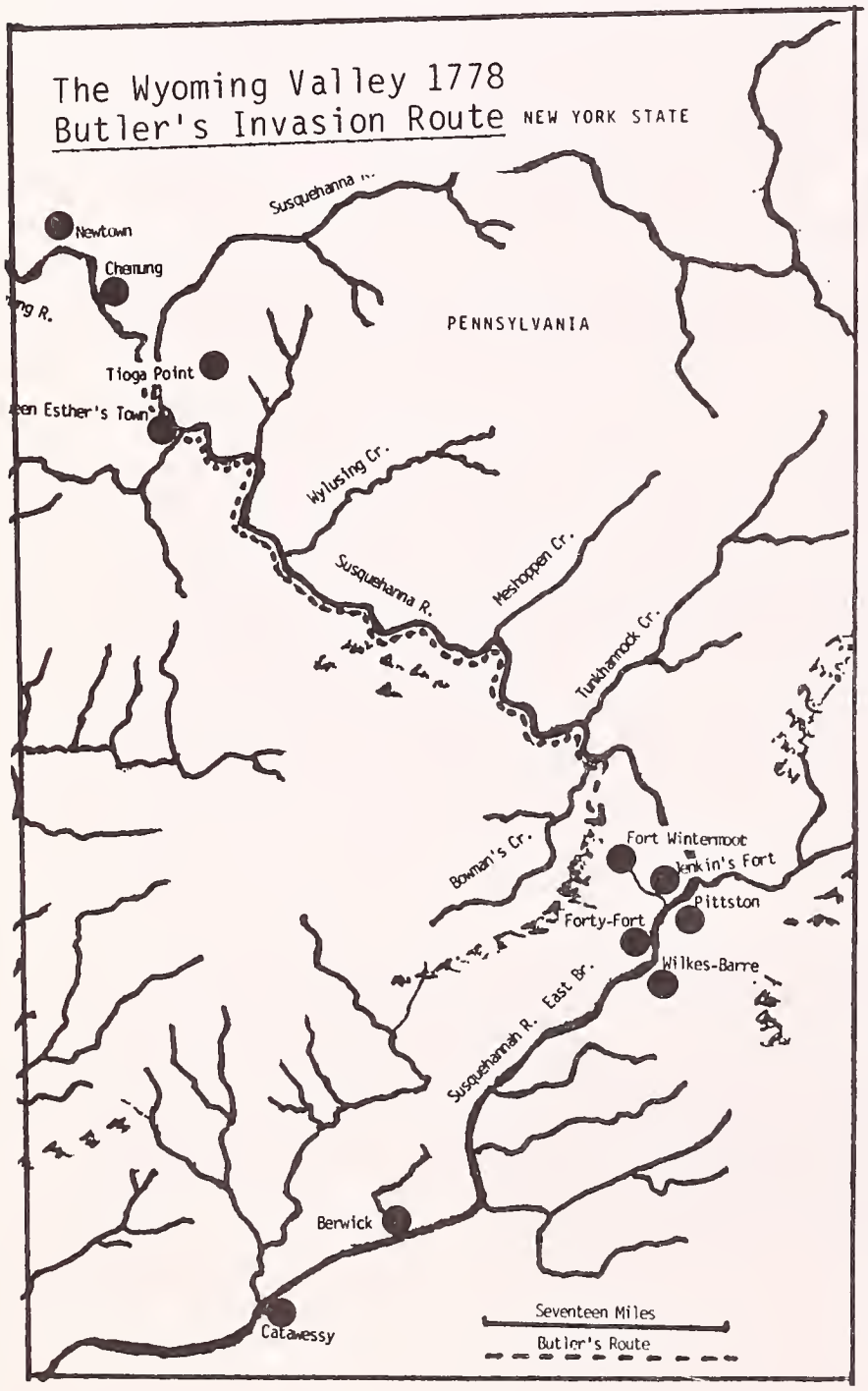
The Battle of Wyoming

Preparation For Invasion, continued



In mid-June 1778, Butler's forces left Niagara on foot, setting out on their trek to to the south and east through western New York, picking up adherents on the way through the hilly fully-leaved forests. So too did the Senecas and Cayugas and others begin to travel toward the rendezvous at Tioga Point.

Tioga Point.



Once there, for several days, the congregated Tories and Indians conferred and planned. The Indians indulged a traditional pre-fight appetite for dog meat, sang their war songs, daubed their faces and bodies with war paint, bragged a lot and psyched themselves up for battle.

At Newtown, a little above Tioga on the Chemung, many canoes and rafts had been built and now these were brought down to Tioga, ready for use.

Preliminary Steps

On June 30, 1778, 1100 [or another number] men boarded the canoes, rafts and batteaux and began paddling or poling silently south on the strong Susquehanna current. And of course they brought at least one woman.

They landed on the west bank below Bowman's Creek and filtered west and south through the forests of the foothills of Scoville Mountain. They encamped within three miles of Fort Wintermoot.

The Battle Of Wyoming

Preliminary Steps, continued

Scouts from this force, reconnoitering, encountered a party from Jenkins' Fort working their fields in Exeter Township. They killed three men and took two prisoners.

The gates of Fort Wintermoot were opened at noon on July 1st and Butler's men were welcomed by the Tories within, to the dismay and disgust of the patriots who had come there for safety. Of course, Mr. and Mrs. Ingersoll and their two sons were among them.

The next day Butler sent a delegation to Jenkins' Fort, demanding surrender. The seven or eight men defenders capitulated, honorably.

Preparation For Defense

On Thursday, July 2nd, Colonel Denison in Forty Fort sent dispatches to the several militia companies, requesting them to assemble there the following day. (There is some doubt about this, but J. Butler may have sent a flag to Forty Fort on July 2nd, demanding surrender, which the defenders declined to do.)

In the forenoon of Friday, July 3rd, the following militia came to Forty Fort, about 300 men:

Two companies from Wilkes-Barre

The Plymouth, Kingston and Hanover companies from their townships south of Forty-Fort

About a company of others, unattached.

Companies from the more distant Huntington and Salem and Lackawanna townships were unable to arrive on time. The Pittston company did not leave its fort since all of their boats had been destroyed or captured by the British. I wonder why they didn't come on foot, since the enemy was not yet on the east bank?

Demand For Surrender

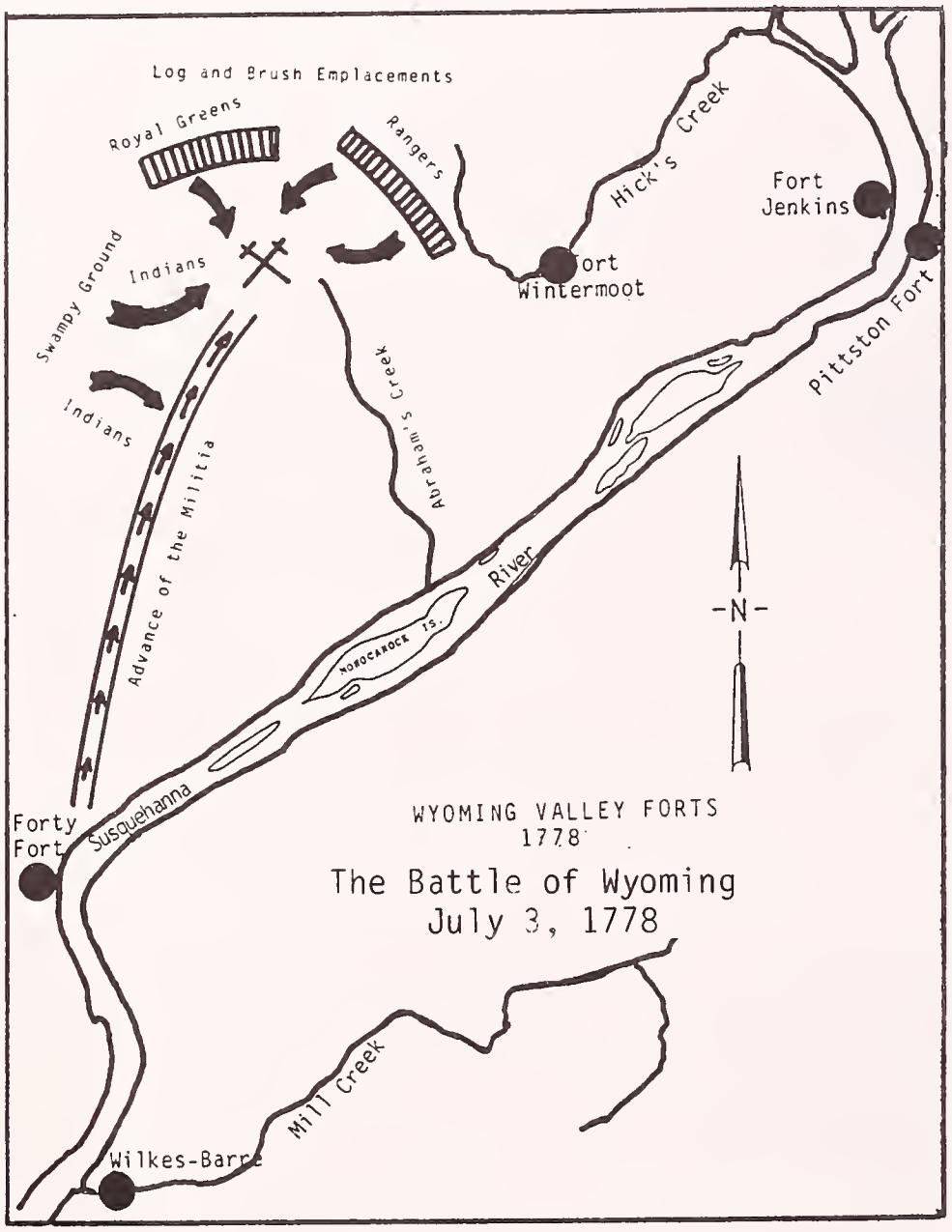
Early on the morning of July 3, 1778 Lieutenant Adam Chrysler of Butler's Rangers, his face painted, an Indian called Blue Throat and Daniel Ingersoll appeared before Forty Fort to present J. Butler's terms for surrender. It was apparent that Ingersoll had been chosen as a spokesman since Wintermoot had advised the British of his well-known hatred of things British or Indian, and that Denison would believe what he said. It went without saying that Daniel's wife and children, at Fort Wintermoot, were hostages for his good behavior.

The delegation delivered John Butler's reasonable surrender terms. All military were to give up their arms and swear not to take them up again, to surrender the fort and military supplies, intact. Non-military people would be allowed to keep personal possessions and would not be harmed. Denison told Chrysler he could not make an official decision since he was not in command and Colonel Z. Butler was not there. Ingersoll was able to indicate to Denison that he thought the invaders were no more numerous than the defenders. Poor information, that! The truce party returned northward, empty-handed.

The Battle Of Wyoming

Attack By the Patriots

Colonel Z. Butler arrived at Forty Fort from Wilkes-Barre early on the afternoon of the 3rd. He advised the garrison to stand pat inside the palisade since substantial reinforcements were on the way. Denison agreed but the militia insisted on marching out to find these lousy punks whom they could lick easily. Logical arguments were presented on both sides, but this was not a day for sense or logic. There were persistent hints that the commanders would be denounced as cowards if they didn't fight right away. Butler and Denison finally yielded to the militia, which was full of beans and spoiling for a fight. [Buckets of rum with dippers were passed around for anyone to drink what he wanted. Colonial frontiersmen were known for their lack of temperance. The raw rum may have affected their thinking, their noisy belligerence and later, their collectively poor aim.]



About 3:00 PM, 300 men marched out to bloody disaster. [They crossed the river.] [They left Forty Fort carrying the Stars and Stripes and with fifers and drummers playing St. Patrick's Day in the Morning.]

[Whoever wrote that must have had his own bucket of rum. No one carried the Stars and Stripes in any Revolutionary land battle, although romantic artists later superimposed flags on fighting scenes for dramatic effect. There were no such flags in Wyoming or even in Pennsylvania. It's extremely doubtful if anyone in Wyoming Valley, invader or defender, had ever heard of such a flag. If fifers and drummers were screeching and banging to announce their presence, Zebulon should have had them shot.]

The militia advanced and at a point three miles from Fort Wintermoot, after crossing Abraham's Creek, they halted for a breather. No enemy had been encountered except a few in the distance who retreated rapidly. The patriot colonels proposed a defensive posture where they were, to wait for the enemy to come to them. Loud mouth Lazarus Stewart ranted and raved and threatened to go on alone with his company, which should be enough to lick these cowardly bastards. Again the 'resolute' commanders acquiesced and the column marched on to its doom, Stewart to have his hothead cooled by an extremely close haircut.

On again, on again, best foot forward. When the enemy finally showed themselves it was from behind roughly constructed but effective log defense works. The militia was in a long, thin line - one step ahead- fire - step - fire - presumably reloading as they stepped, providing excellent targets. There seemed to be no effort to find any protection from return fire. Reports said they kept this up for three quarters of an hour [a half hour] and that they seemed to be gaining a 'marked superiority.'

The Battle Of Wyoming

Attack By the Patriots, continued

The quote "... the patriots maintained a continual and heavy fire" may be true but if it is, they must have been firing into the ground or into the air. See Pre-Battle Comment.

Disaster

Suddenly a horde of previously concealed Indians materialized from the swampy ground at the patriots' left. all a-whoop and a-holler, brandishing tomahawks and spears. Colonel Denison's order to one company to wheel left to face this surge was heard incorrectly or misinterpreted as an order to retreat. Some began to do that and then the warriors were upon them, putting their weapons to bloody work.

A few smashed skulls turned the retreat into a rout. All hell broke loose. Run for your lives! Militia men threw away their muskets in order to run faster only to fall face forward propelled by axes in their heads. The six militia captains tried valiantly to stem the tide but it became a flood and all six died in the deluge. One of the survivors saw Colonel Denison fighting off a half-dozen savages and feared that he had been killed. But the doughty Colonel survived and reached Forty Fort.

The patriots ran, frantic, and the British and Indians chased them, killing any they could catch. Note the savage glare of the Indian in the foreground of the above picture. Somehow I get the impression he wants to be sure a cameraman has him in his lens.

It was a bloody shambles. 60 men made it live to Forty Fort while the enemy was busy in its abattoir. Another 60 escaped killing temporarily by surrendering, not realizing they would be the star actors in the second act that evening.

The Battle Of Wyoming

Holocaust

The patriots who surrendered on the field of Wyoming in the late afternoon of July 3, 1778 were to furnish night-long entertainment for the blood-mad Indians. (I think many of Butler's white soldiers may have participated in these abominations. It is obvious they made no attempt to stop them - perhaps they wanted to but hadn't the guts to do it.)

A glimpse of the Bloody Rock horror-show was presented earlier. Senecas were known to be cruel dudes and they could devise new and more vicious forms of torture at the drop of a scalp. That was their tradition, the way they were taught to fight. That's why they fought. If they had lost, they would have expected to be treated cruelly until they died.

Some of the torments were inflicted so near Forty Fort that its huddled, miserable, frightened occupants could hear the screaming all night. Those whose sons or husbands or beaus had not come in could wonder if that screaming sufferer was a dear one. This was deliberate remote torture.

The descriptions are repugnant. I dare say some of them are true but there are hints of eye-witness imagination forty years after the fact, greedily accepted and amplified by colonial media.

Casualties

As there were wide variances in the stated numbers of participants in the battle, so too were there differences in the number of patriots killed. Choose from:

160 dead on July 3, 1778.
600 Connecticut people scalped.
400 dead.
More than 300 tomahawked or burned at the stake.
227 scalped.

John Butler announced his losses as 3 dead and 8 wounded. Obviously he was using the propaganda value of insignificant losses. Patriot sources say his losses were much higher, perhaps 80 killed and wounded. While John Butler was patently lying, so too were the Wyoming reporters. Compromise.

Flight

On the night of July 3, Colonal Z. Butler and his wife and 16 unwounded surviving "regulars" left Forty Fort and crossed to Wilkes-Barre and the next night they proceeded down river to safety. Zeb was severely criticized for this flight, but it was a sensible move. Nothing would have been accomplished if he and the 16 had remained. Live to fight another day!

Surrender

On July 4, 1778 John Butler met with Nathan Denison, demanding surrender on the same terms as previously offered, except that Butler insisted that seven barrels of whiskey in the fort's stores be destroyed before the gates were opened.

The Battle Of Wyoming

Surrender, continued

The surrender took place late in the afternoon of July 4. [One guy had Butler's Rangers marching in four abreast with fifes and drums playing. Bunk! This wasn't that kind of fight. This wasn't a movie set. Did they bring drums 200 miles through the forest? Unless they captured the instruments that the patriots did not have!]

Almost at once, the Indians broke the agreement and began looting with no regard for personal property. This continued for three days. (There must have been a hell of a lot of stuff in this two-acre enclosure.) While Butler said he could not control the Indians, he did ask Denison to prepare a list of articles taken, so he could arrange for restitution (a silly request). I saw no record anywhere of any subsequent restitution.

A Few Contradictory Quotes

Muse over the implications of these statements.

"... and then shutting up the rest, with the women and children in the houses, they set fire to them and all perished together in the flames."

"the settlers were for the most part, hacked and slashed to pieces, taken prisoner and slowly tortured to death. Pregnant women, children and gray-heads were driven into houses and barns and burned alive with the buildings." (This quotation is from Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, a son-in-law of Conrad Weiser. He was a leading Lutheran minister and was just as wrong as anyone else.)

"... but no massacre of the population took place afterwards. Clearly ... refugees exaggerated the facts, thus adding to the wave of horror..."

"The massacre grew in bloodiness with each telling."

"No American died at Forty Fort after the capitulation."

"... Thomas Hill, a Tory, was said with his own hands to have killed his mother, his father-in-law, sisters and their families. He scalped them all and cut off his father's head." There's a real hater.

"Colonel Denison commented later on the sincere efforts of John Butler to prevent any killing of civilians, although he could not protect their possessions."

Destruction

There isn't any argument that the invaders did destroy the valley's crops, houses and barns except those owned by Tories. Live stock that could not be taken with them were killed. Anything of value too heavy or cumbersome to carry away was damaged so as to make it unusable or inoperative. This was their military mission and they accomplished it. War is war!

The Battle Of Wyoming

Refugees

Many had left the Valley and even the regions west of it during the June "runaway."

But after July 3, there was a wild flurry of flight. Everyone and his neighbor, dazed by horror seen or heard, but not yet aware of the enormity of it, scurried and scrambled to get the hell out of there - somewhere - anywhere - quickly!

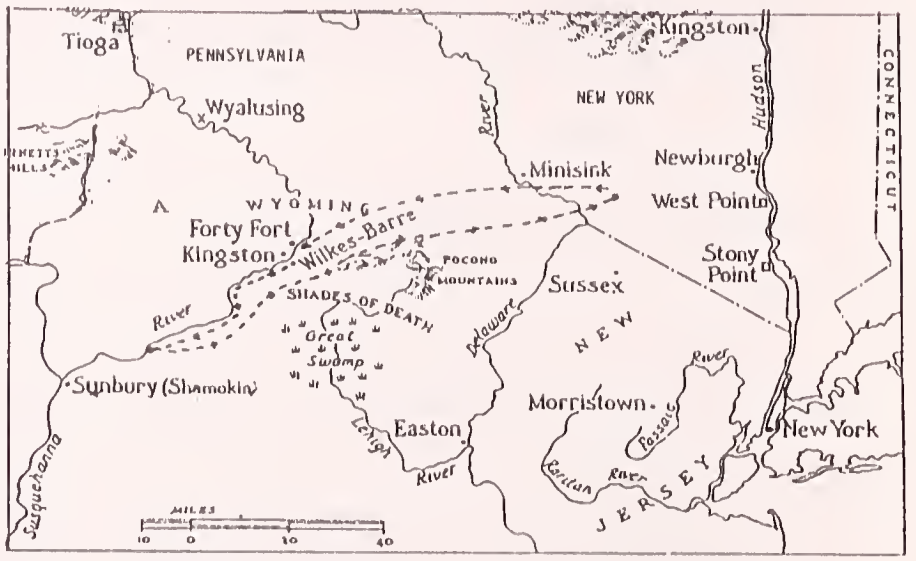
They went in all directions and by any means, afoot and barefoot if necessary. They left their burning homes, their ruined crops, their slaughtered herds, but they carried little save their grief and anger, stunned by the hopeless outlook.

Some, when they reached their planned destination found that the people of that place had already left, no longer feeling secure where they were. So off they would go on another hopeful lap.

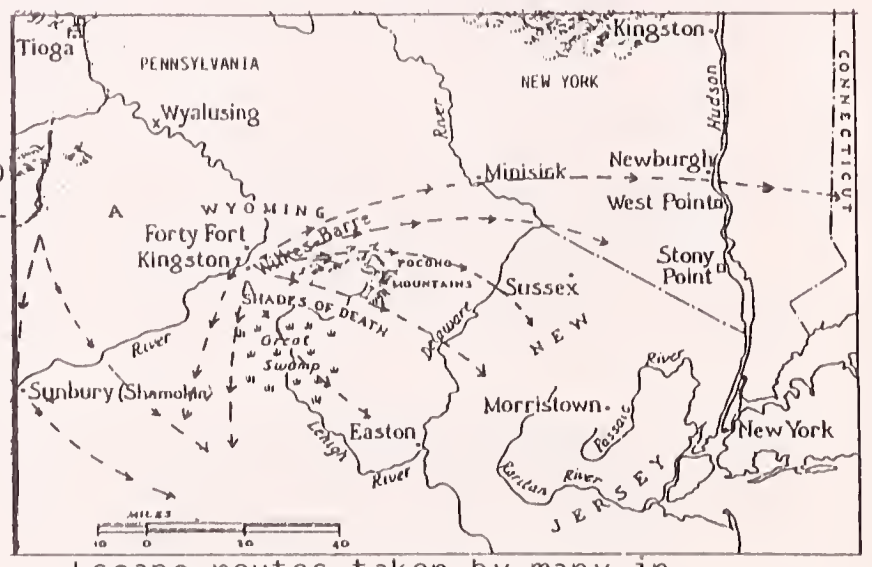
There were pregnant young women, carefully balancing the awkward bulges that were all that was left of their cherished husbands. There were mothers with babes in arms, whimpering toddlers clutching their skirts, older children carrying whatever they had of their possessions. There were old people staring blankly into space. There were sick people, gritting their teeth, detesting their need for help, struggling to retain their dignity, to disguise their spasms of pain.

There was no food, no shelter, no transport, but there were swamps to get mired in, water to swim or wade, hills to climb, endless dark forest aisles to travel.

Many died from starvation and exhaustion. So many succumbed in the swampy area on the road south to Easton, that to this day, it is called The Shades Of Death.



Routes taken by the Browns in fleeing in July and returning in November.

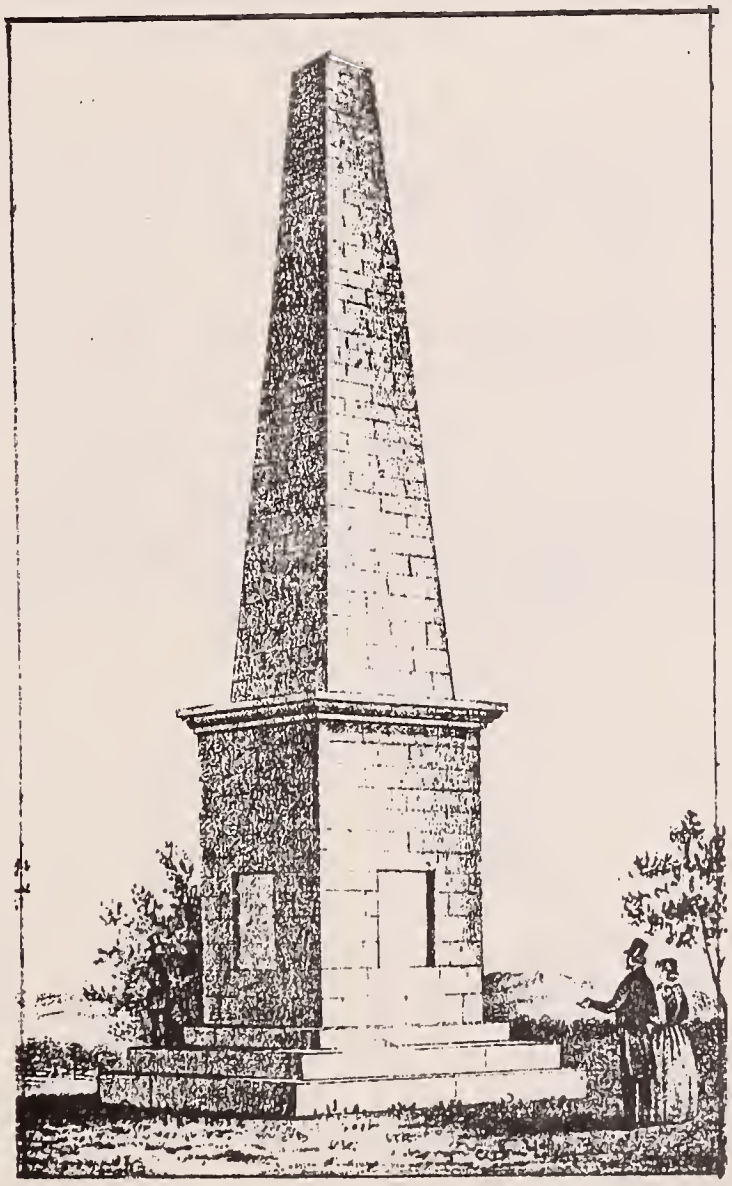


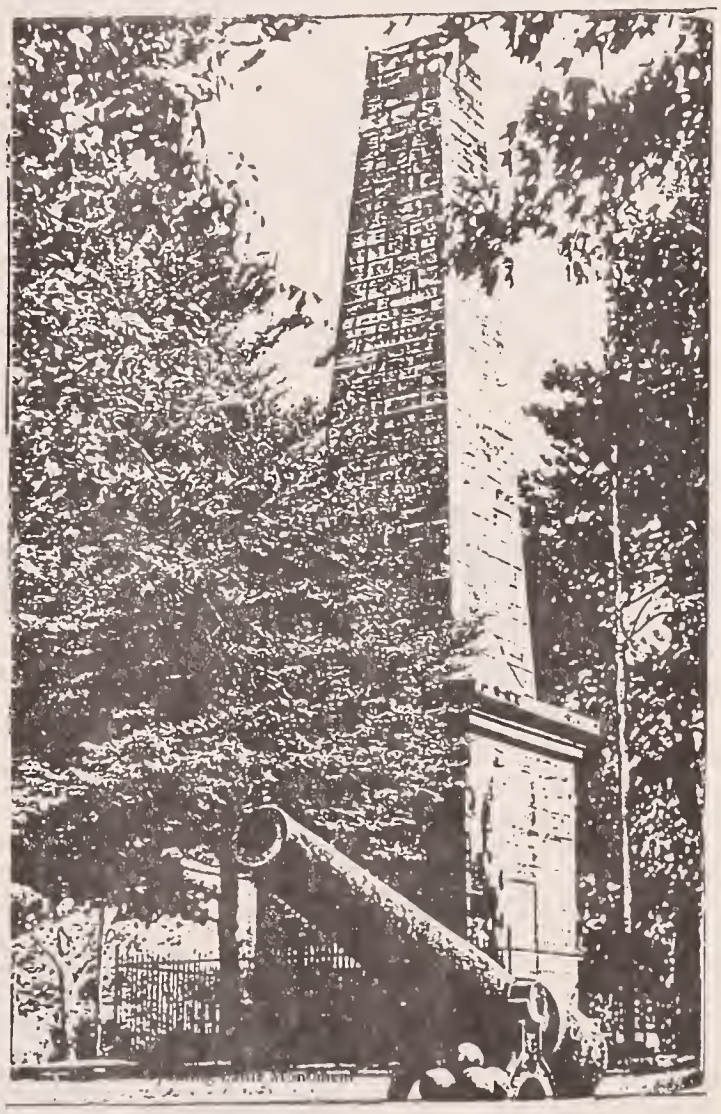
Escape routes taken by many in fleeing from Wyoming. Some of these never did come back.

The Battle Of Wyoming

Monument On The Battlefield

In 1841 local organizations tried unsucessfully to have the Legislature erect a memorial to the victims of July 3, 1778. Not to be deterred by a bunch of budget minded, short-sighted politicians, a group of ladies organized the Luzerne Monument Association, raised the necessary funds and had a monument erected. At the left below is a copy of the architect's sketch and, at the right, the monument as it appears now, Its overall height is 62½ feet.





Near this spot was fought
on the afternoon of Friday, the third day of July, 1778

THE BATTLE OF WYOMING

In which a samll band of patriot Americans,
chiefly the undisciplined, the youthful, and the aged,
spared, by inefficiency, from the distant ranks of the republic,
led by Col. Zebulon Butler, and Col. Nathan Oenison,

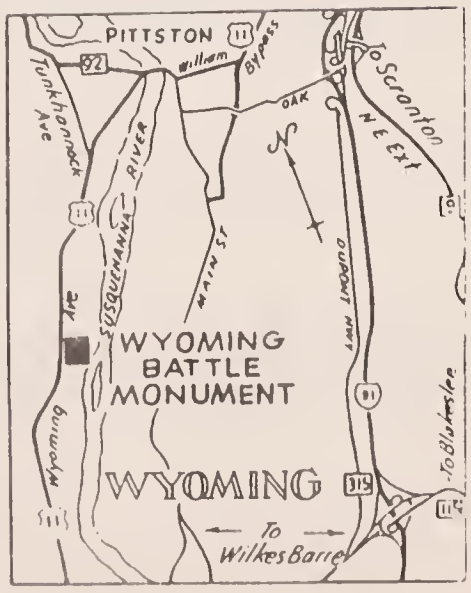
With a courage that deserved success,
boldly met and bravely fought,
a combined British, Tory, and Indian force
of thrice their number.

Numerical superiority alone gave success to the invader
And wide-spread havoc, desolation and ruin
marked his savage and bloody footsteps through the valley.

THIS MONUMENT,
commemorative of these events,
and of the actors in them,
has been erected
over the bones of the slain,
By their descendants, and others, who gratefully appreciated
the services and sacrifices of their patriot ancestors.

Two marble tablets are attached to the base. One lists victims and survivors as then known. The other carries an inscription by Edward Mallery.

It is known now that the list is incomplete. The names of Thomas Brown and John Brown are shown.



The Battle Of Wyoming

Finale

Your indefatigable compiler has waded, plodded and sloughed through a welter of stories of the events along the Susquehanna River in July 1778, which have become fixed in recorded American history as the "Wyoming Massacre." This title, a creation of prejudiced frontier journalists, is based largely on hearsay and "eye-witness" accounts of non-combatants solicited 10 to 50 years after the fateful date. During the same 40 year period, recollections were advanced by others at least as well qualified, disputing the term "massacre", if indeed they did not disprove it.

Dictionary Definitions:

Massacre - The act or instance of killing a number of usually helpless or unresisting human beings under circumstances of atrocity or cruelty.

Battle - A general encounter between armies, an extended struggle or controversy.

Have I in any way led you to think that recorded history is pretty much as someone wanted it to be and had the wit to write it? I hope so. The record of Wyoming is not history because no one who wrote it originally knew what the truth was nor tried to find it. But those early versions are so solidly cemented into the archives that no one can blast them out. But doubt can be cast upon them. By whom, you ask? Who else?

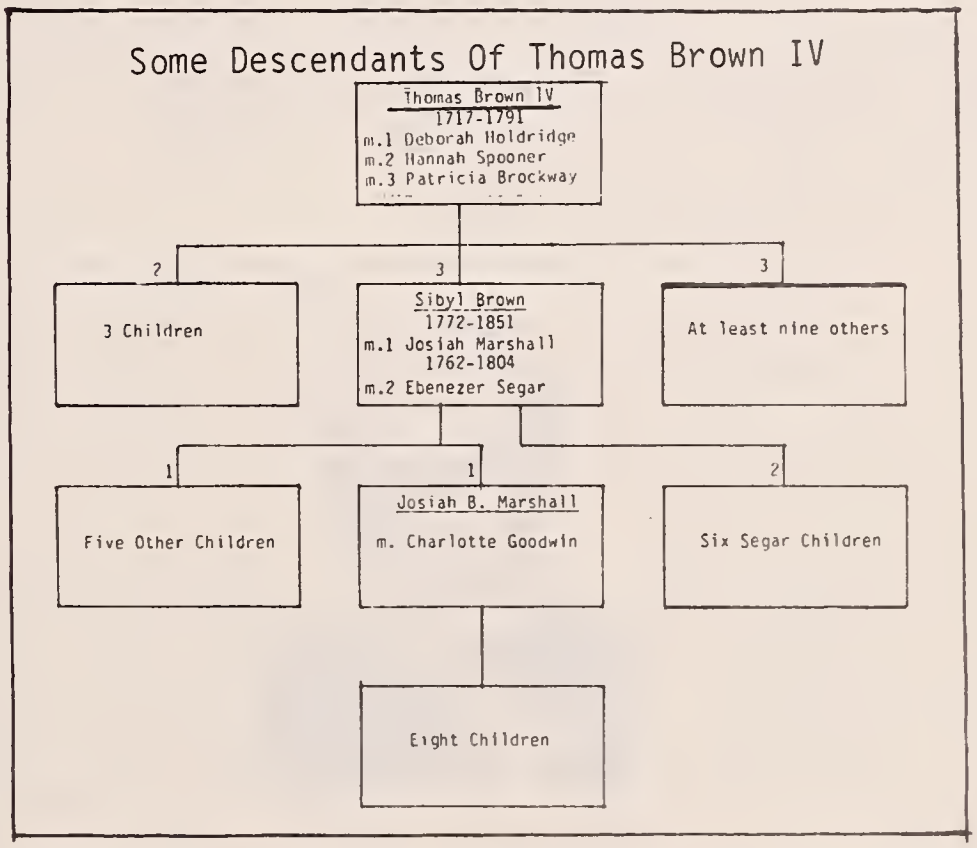
All That Glisters Is Not Gold

A Matter of Identity

Clement F. Heverly, in his "Pioneer and Patriot Families of Bradford County, Pennsylvania 1800-1825" had this to say of one Josiah B. Marshall, a grandson of Thomas Brown IV, a Wyoming survivor:

> "He was a man of considerable prominence, but shamefully deserted his family, going to the Sandwich Islands, then to California, where, it is claimed, he was the Marshall who discovered gold on the American River in 1848."

Maybe so, maybe no. The man who first discovered gold at Sutter's Fort in 1848 carried the surname Marshall and had come to California from the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii). At that time he used the given names James Wilson. Granted, Josiah could have adopted the alias James Wilson Marshall to distance himself from his wife and 8 children in Pennsylvania. Why in hell he didn't change his surname to something exotic like Brown (sic), I'll never guess. One source refers to him as a "mechanic" from New Jersey. The following chart shows the place of Josiah B. Marshall in the Brown genealogy.



The history of John Augustus Sutter has been told many times. Here is a capsule version. He was born in Germany in 1803 of Swiss parentage and came to America in 1834, leaving his wife and children behind. He settled in California when it belonged to Mexico and established a considerable property on the American River, near the present Sacramento.

He attracted Indians, Hawaiians, Mexican and American settlers and erected Fort Sutter. His holdings were tremendous, 20,000 sheep, 15000 cattle, 2000 horses, and the acres to support them, nut and fruit orchards and even three acres of cultivated flowers.

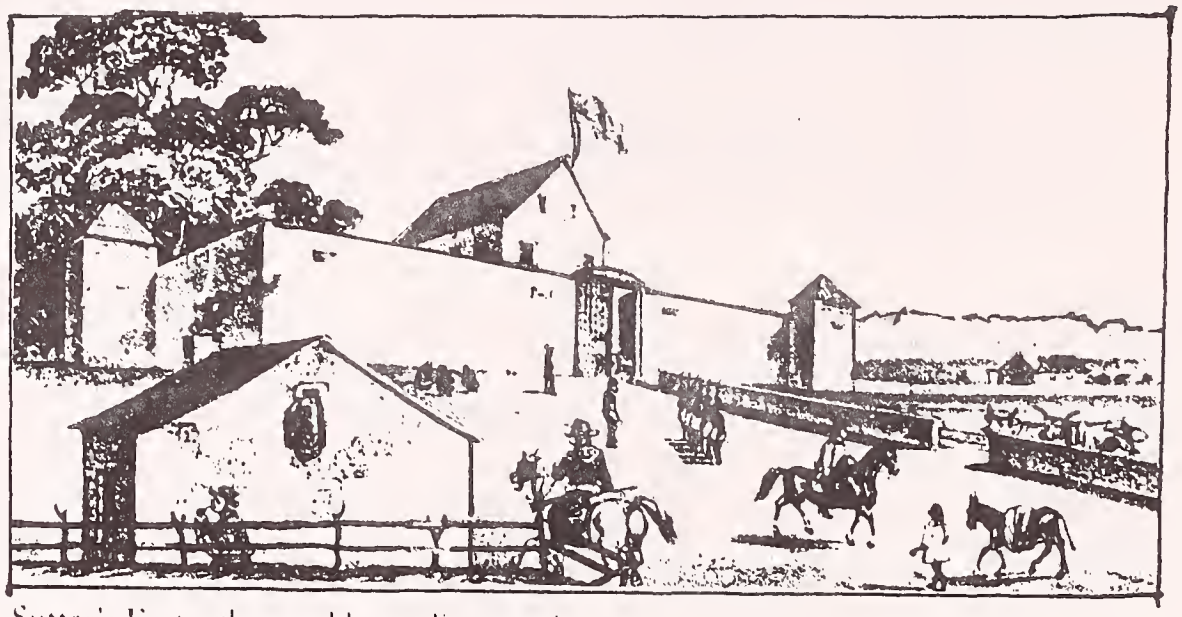
He had a reputation of welcoming everyone, treating them well and honestly.

Whether Marshall was James Wilson or Josiah B., he was a wheelwright and carpenter and was under contract to Sutter to build a saw mill some distance from the fort. It was while he was doing this that he found the first shining nugget on Sutter's property.

All That Glisters Is Not Gold

A Matter of Identity, continued

In spite of the efforts of Sutter and Marshall to keep the news of the find under control, the news got out and the history and economy of the country would never be the same.



Sutter's Fort, where gold was discovered.

Nothing could restrain prospectors from all over the country from over-running Sutter's property, literally trampling Sutter and Marshall underfoot. They were so crazed with greed that they had absolutely no regard for law, order or the rights of others. They over-ran and ruined Sutter's land, slaughtered his live-stock, destroyed everything he had worked to accumulate. In 1852 he was bankrupt. The State of California granted him a pension of $250 a month, but discontinued it in 1878. Sutter died, broke and broken-hearted, in Washington DC in 1880.

John Augustus Sutter

James Wilson Marshall (?)

Marshall fared even worse. He was off his rocker for a while, confined, and at one time made his living by selling autographs. He died in poverty and is buried in Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park in Coloma, California. A statue of Marshall marks his grave, his finger pointing to the exact spot where he found the shining nugget.

Nobody is asking me, but I don't think he was Josiah. Or maybe -----

Sir William Johnson, First Baronet of New York

Who Is This In Our Midst?

William Johnson was a striking, colorful, interesting and important figure in colonial history, which does not qualify him for a place, however small, in these august pages. But - he became an ancestor of the Heeman family and thereby earned a niche in our prestigious hall of fame. And -

He was a contemporary of Conrad Weiser, the direct ancestor of your compiler, who denies all charges of retrospective nepotism. Johnson's actions as a soldier touched the life of at least one Ingersoll in 1755. Another family of Ingersolls and the Brown family were threatened by military actions of William's son and son-in-law in the Wyoming Valley in 1778.

There are reams of data on the political aspects of his time and place. I read lots of it; despite its importance, I found it tedious and difficult to follow and understand. It would bore you, if you had the patience to finish it. Let us not grieve over its absence.

I'll describe enough of WJ's deeds and antics for you to evaluate him yourself.

Early and often I have decried the differences in historians' versions of historical material. Such differences appear here too. These will be designated by brackets at the beginning and end of successive alternatives, as heretofore. My preference appears first; it is not always the version most likely to be true. Silent disagreement is welcome.

Origins

William Johnson was born in 1715, in Ireland, at Warrentown, County Meath [at Smithtown, County Meath] [at Warrenspoint, County Down]. These counties are the shaded areas on the map at the right. Wherever he was born, he was welcome, since three sisters had preceded him.

The Johnsons were descended from the O'Neils of Celtic Ireland. Their surname then was MacShane (son of Sean), which was prudently anglicized by William's great grandfather to Johnson (son of John), evidently as a means of remaining alive among the English conquerors of the "Ould Sod."

His father was Christopher Johnson, a miller on a 200 acre farm rented from the Earl of Fingal [or an obscure schoolmaster in County Down, who had been an officer of Cadogan's Horse, a noted regiment, until crippled in battle].

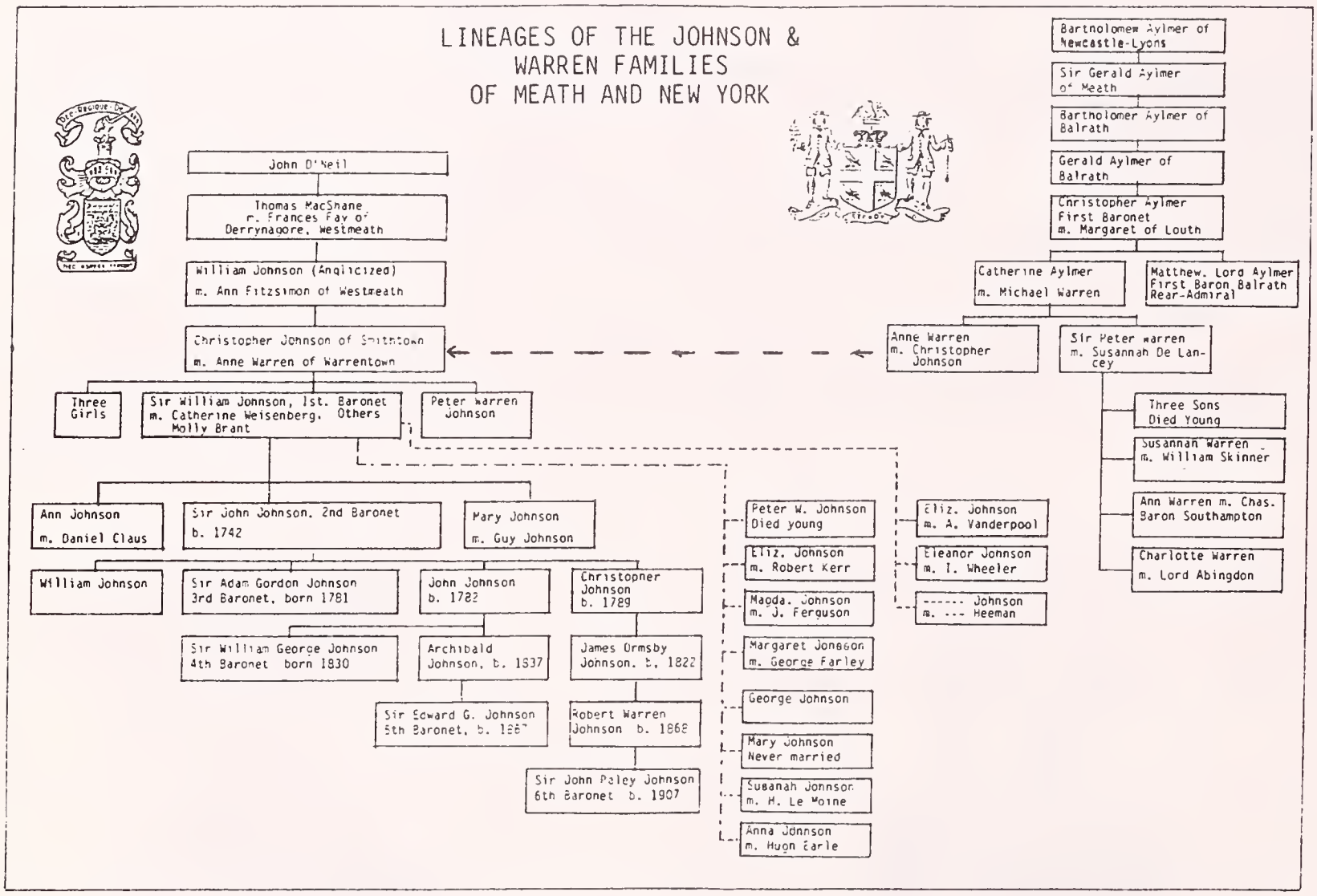
Christopher's low station, whatever, did not deter him from wooing, winning, wedding and bedding (presumably in that order) a lovely girl, Anne Warren of Warrentown.

Sir William Johnson, First Baronet of New York

Origins, continued

Anne was the daughter of Michael Warren and Catherine (Aylmer) Warren. Michael's ancestors were Plantagenet supporters rewarded with a Boyne River Valley Manor in County Meath in 1282. Unfortunately, they were also adherents of James II in the 1690 Battle of the Boyne, and thus forfeited their estates.

Anne's maternal grandfather was Sir Christopher Aylmer, the First Baronet of Balrath and her uncle Matthew was a Lord of the Admiralty and an Admiral of the British Navy. These relationships are laid out on the following chart.



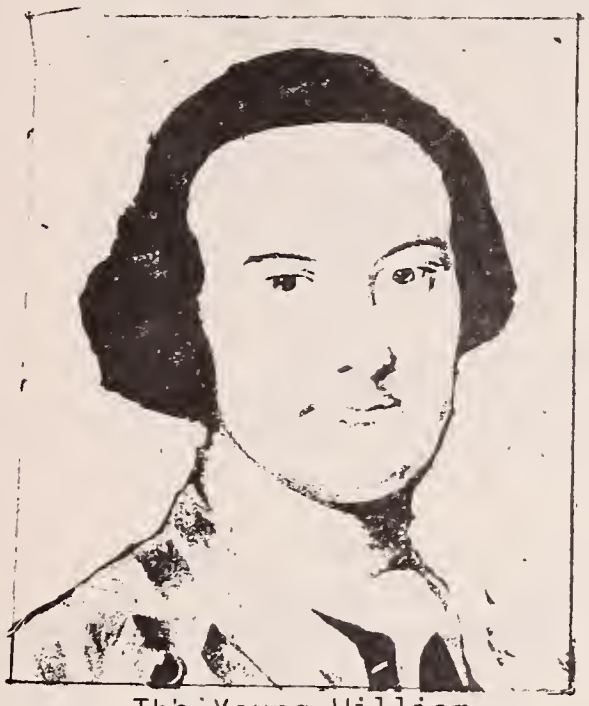
Johnson's Physical Characteristics

At birth William was strong, healthy and loud. At 18 he was just under six feet in height, "suitably broad of beam", quick to action and quick to laughter, friendly, with a big head and an aura of great strength.

His hair was thick and dark [his hair was red], his complexion swarthy. His eyes were "usually warm, dark hazel that turned to smoky gray when he was angered." Note the quotation marks. These are not my words. I wouldn't have written them under threat of torture.

Sir William Johnson, First Baronet of New York

Physical Characteristics, continued


The Young William

Five years later he was well over six feet, with a loud voice [a coarse rough-hewn man] [a great lout of 23, too wild for the likes of here].

The memoirs of an American lady who knew him well (maybe very well) said, "He was uncommonly tall, well-made man, with a fine countenance, which, however, had rather an expression of dignified sedateness, approaching melancholy. He appeared to be taciturn, never wasting words on matters of importance, but highly eloquent." [He was almost fat.] [He was usually pleasant, affectionate and tender, but explosive and violent when angered.]

Early Tendencies and Appetites

Young William was exposed to an education, but he absorbed only enough to make himself understood in ungrammatical writing and to read adequately. As a lad he was proficient at running, fighting, riding, hunting, drinking and wenching. Early on he earned a reputation as a relentless pursuer of young girls and his frequent success honed his appetite and skill. He was a youthful woman-chaser and kept it up all his life. He was constantly randy, constantly trying to relieve his itch, and the consequences may have done him in.

Later, a mature and busy man of affairs he was still a rampant womanizer, a hollow-legged boozer and, despite all of this, an adroit planner, a strong leader of men, inspiring confidence, a real charmer. Even Conrad Weiser, who really didn't think too much of him, admitted that he always liked him when in his presence.

Prospects

While still young William felt that only peasants, priests or martyrs could remain Catholics in the British Empire. He did not fancy himself in any of those roles. Never devout, he abandoned the Catholic Church and outwardly professed his belief in the precepts of the Church of England, perhaps with his fingers crossed.

Christopher gave him a trial as an apprentice miller but that didn't last long; he hated it and did a lousy job, probably dreaming of hunting, riding and girls, girls, girls. His father and William mutually agreed to end his short milling career.

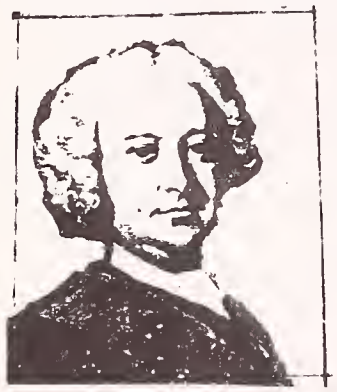
Opportunities in County Meath (or anywhere in Ireland) were virtually non-existent for a man of William's restlessness, energy, push and position. At 23, he had reluctantly made arrangements to study law in Dublin, when his mother received a letter from her younger brother Peter, offering William a job in the New World. Bill was also in the midst of a contretemps (probably spelled pregnancy) with a local girl who didn't run fast enough, and he jumped at the chance. His parents were probably equally delighted.

Sir William Johnson, First Baronet of New York

Peter Warren (later Sir Peter, Admiral Warren)

Anne (Warren) Johnson had a younger brother Peter, born in County Meath in 1703. Since his uncle was a British Navy big shot, he became a midshipman at 12, the year William was born. In July, 1730 Peter came to America as the Captain of a 20-gun frigate HMS Solebay.

Peter married Susannah, the sister of James DeLancey, of a wealthy patroon family, Chief Justice (and later Lt. Governor) of New york. DeLancey was also top-man in the profitable smuggling of goods from Canada. Acting on the advice of his new brother-in-law, Peter bought some land now comprising Greenwich Village in a real steal and 14,000 acres of Mohawk Valley land for 25¢ per acre. Since Peter was busy sailoring he needed someone trustworthy to manage his Mohawk estate which was becoming more and more valuable as Palatinate people began to move into the area. So he wrote to his sister.



Peter Warren

Peter Warren was a little over 5 feet tall, thick bodied. His skin was pale, his face peppered with freckles. He was vain, boastful, a dandy, well educated, self assured and an efficient and daring naval officer.

In 1742, after 27 years in the Navy, and stemming from his exploits in the taking of Louisbourg, Peter was made a Vice-Admiral. Shortly afterward he retired to London, living comfortably on half-pay and the prize money he had accumulated from captured vessels. He was knighted and served in Parliament.

He died in Dublin in 1752 and is buried in Knockmark Church, near Warrentown. There is a monument to his honor in Westminster Abbey. He and Susannah had six children, of whom three girls lived to maturity. Two of them married English noblemen.

The Chart of Descent two pages back might be helpful at this point.

Peter left his Mohawk estate to his nephew, William Johnson.

William Comes to America

Uncle Peter Warren met William when he debarked from the ship in Boston Harbor in late 1737. They were different in looks and outlook but they hit it off immediately. William envied his uncle's position, wealth and life style and resolved to get some of that for himself. Some sources say that Peter legally adopted William, then or later.

The two left almost immediately for New York, where they tarried some, then went on to Albany. Introduced into society in these provincial cities, William exerted his own personal charm with the ladies and found it worked here as well. During the winter of 1737-38 he cut a swathe through the available and desirable females.

Early in 1738, WJ assumed charge of his uncle's 14,000 acres, on the south bank of the Mohawk River, just west of the mouth of the Schoharie River. He could look across the river to the east at Fort Hunter and the enormous holdings of the Butler family, who would become his staunchest friends and supporters. He established a store at Warrenburg (Warrenbush) and encouraged Scotch-Irish to buy and settle on 100-300 acre plots from the original Warren purchase.

Sir William Johnson, First Baronet of New York

William Comes to America, continued

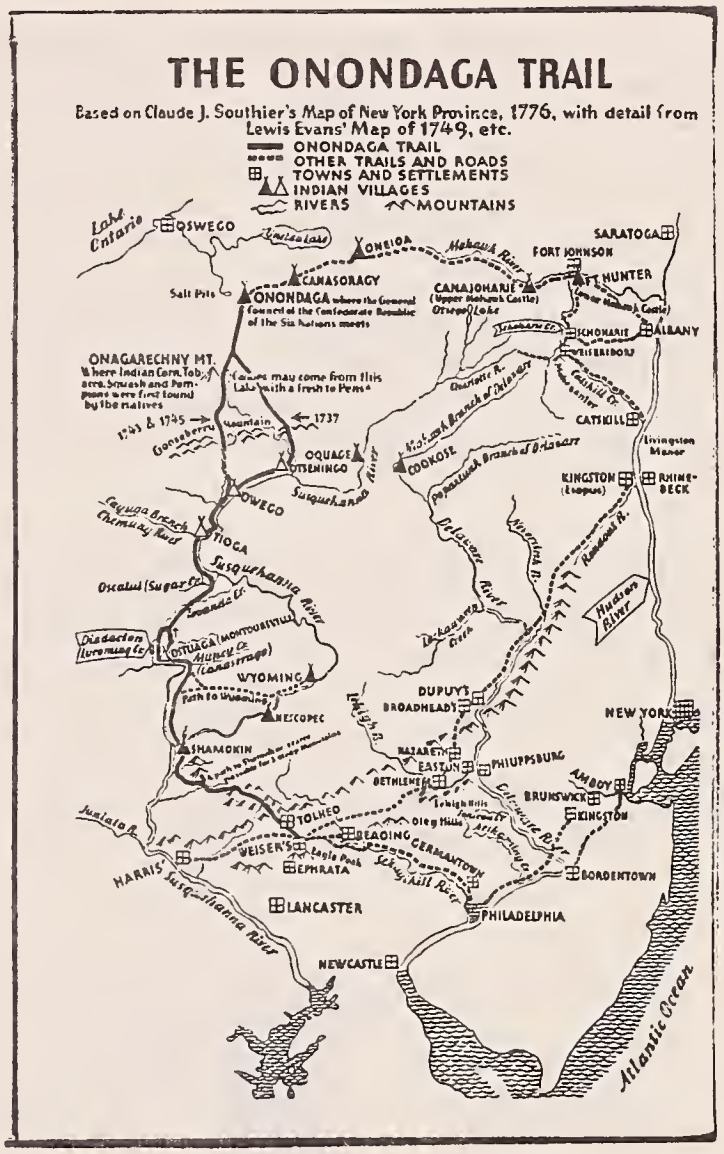
Johnson obtained a Governor's license to trade for himself, determined to demonstrate that a white trader could be honest and fair and still prosper. His trading post was at the Oneida Indian settlement of Oquawgo (Oquage) on the Onandaga Trail in the Susquehanna Valley, near what is now the Broome County town of Windsor, a few miles east of Binghamton, New York.

Since it was 100 miles from Warrensburg, he employed Ezra Buell, Jr. to run it, insisting that these rules always applied:

a) Never deal with an Indian who was not sober.
b) Always honor deals made, no quibbling.
c) No meant no. Yes meant yes.

This location was too far away to compete with his uncle's business. In fact, Peter Warren helped to finance the project.

In 1739, William purchased land, dirt cheap (pun intended), for himself, on the north bank of the Mohawk. Almost immediately he began to build a house there. It was completed and he moved into it in 1743.



Interlude

Limitations of space and patience compel me to use a clumsy literary contrivance here. First, I'll describe the houses Johnson built and lived in. His deeds as a soldier, statesman and political rascal will follow and then there'll be a sketch of his full sex life. These were all simultaneous and continuing, of course. It is not possible satisfactorily to mix tales of might, power and skullduggery with those of bedroom exploits. That understood, I'll proceed.

Land, Land, Give Me Land

Throughout his life, William's land hunger never abated. All he wanted was the land next to his. Speculate what he would have done if he had to choose between land and women! When he died he owned the largest landed estate in the colonies, acquired by purchase, theft, gift or bequest. Estimates vary but no one hesitates to say he owned 1,000,000 acres, and no one denies that he did. Hundreds of settlers from Europe were his tenants. The courthouse was his personal property.

He had other assets, too, of all sorts. In one of his early deals William acquired 19 negro slaves. When he died he owned over 60 and was then the largest slave holder in the colony of New York.

Sir William Johnson, First Baronet of New York

Life With The Indian Braves

Johnson liked Indians and their ways and early on he could see that his own success or failure depended to a large extent on getting along with them better than other white men had. He treated them ostensibly as equals, learned their languages, dialects and customs, sat in their conferences, wrestled with the braves, danced with them, went on the war-path with them, killed with them, got drunk with them at his own expense, and fornicated with their wives and daughters.

But Johnson knew which side he was on. First he was his own man, then the Crown's. When it suited his purpose or humor he played at being Indian, but he never really became one. When William's interests or those of the Crown required deception or even betrayal of the Indians, he acted without hesitation or compunction, but with the skill of an artful dodger.

There is ample evidence of this and no indication that the Indians ever seriously doubted his loyalty to them. He seems to have served three masters, Johnson, the King and the Indians, in that declining order.

He was formally adopted as a Mohawk blood-brother in 1742.

One chief, speaking for the Mohawks, said, "... for we love him, and he us, and he has always been our good and trusted friend."

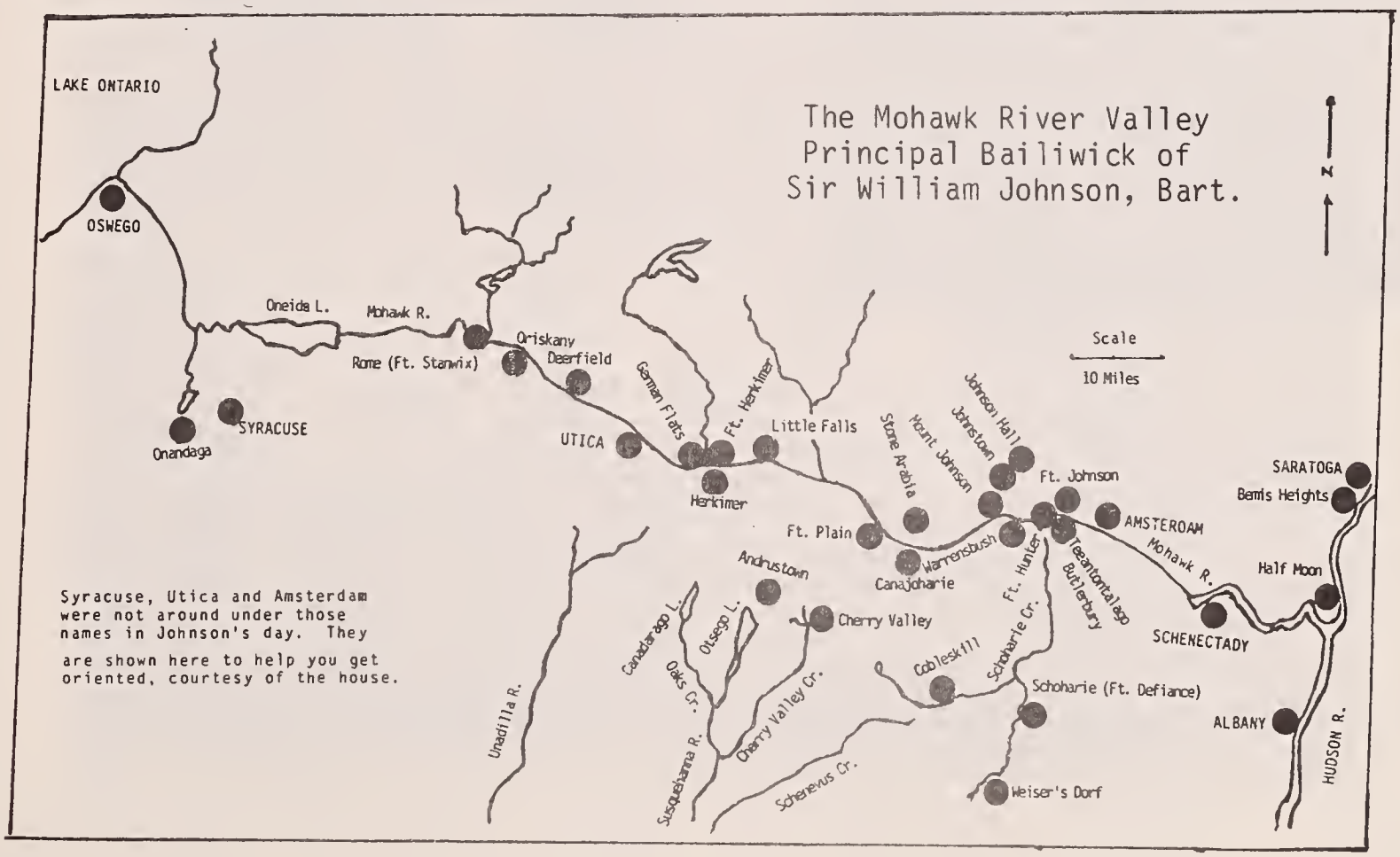
William Johnson often exchanged gifts with his Indian friends. Here he is shown with Molly Brant at Johnson Hall greeting chiefs who have brought him gifts.

Sir William Johnson, First Baronet of New York

William Johnson's Houses

William acquired a fabulous fortune; his assets increased so fast he didn't know how rich he was at any given time. Cash flow was no problem; he was used to a steady and growing income from trading activities as well as the rents and produce of his fields and mills and emoluments from the government.

During his 37 years on the Mohawk he lived in or owned only four houses. All save the first were strong, stone structures that served as castles or forts in wartime. But the defensive aspects of the houses declined as the interiors became more and more elaborate, indicative of the prosperity and baronial splendor of a country squire.



This map may be helpful in determining the locations of Johnson's houses.

From 1738 to 1742-42, William lived and worked in a modest log cabin in Warrenbush. In 1739 he brought Catherine Weisenberg to his hearth and bed. Their three children were born in that cabin. Meantime he had been building a fine stone house he would call Mount Johnson on his land north of the Mohawk. In late 1743 the Johnson family moved into their new home.

Fort Johnson, a great stone house, was completed in 1749, a few miles west of the site of the present city of Amsterdam. It was built of gray fieldstone and, at one time, had a stockade. This was home for William and his family and a series of housekeepers and bedwarmers over a period of years.

Sir William Johnson, First Baronet of New York

William Johnson's Houses, continued

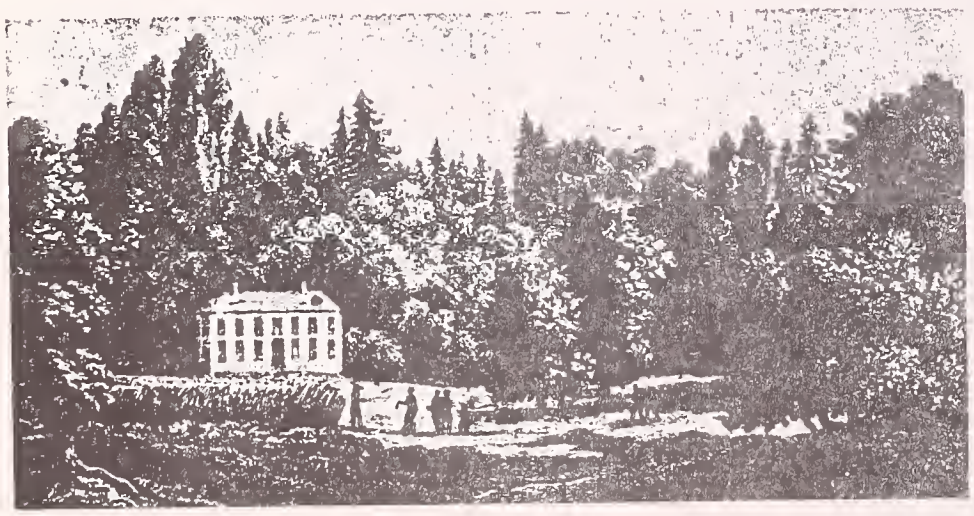
Fort Johnson Today

This is William all gussied up in new regalia when he was first designated by Governor Clinton as top man in dealing with the Six Nations.

In 1762-63 William moved again and presented Fort Johnson to his son John. When John fled to Canada in 1777, the property was confiscated. It's lead roof was removed and melted down into bullets for the Continental Army. It has had a new roof (non-lead) for a long time and is owned by the Montgomery County Historical Society. It stands on Route 5, open to the public. The illustration will give you some idea of its dimensions and appearance.

Johnson Hall (Johnson Castle) was built in 1762-63 just a short distance north of the settlement of Johnstown which William had developed for newcomers in 1759-60. This new home is a few miles west of Fort Johnson. Take a look at the map.

The builders of Johnson Hall were Lemal Baker and Samuel Fuller. It's a two-story structure with basement and attic, now at the corner of Johnson and Hall Avenues in Johnstown.



This is a preliminary sketch of Johnson Hall, showing the architect's conception of it in idyllic surroundings.

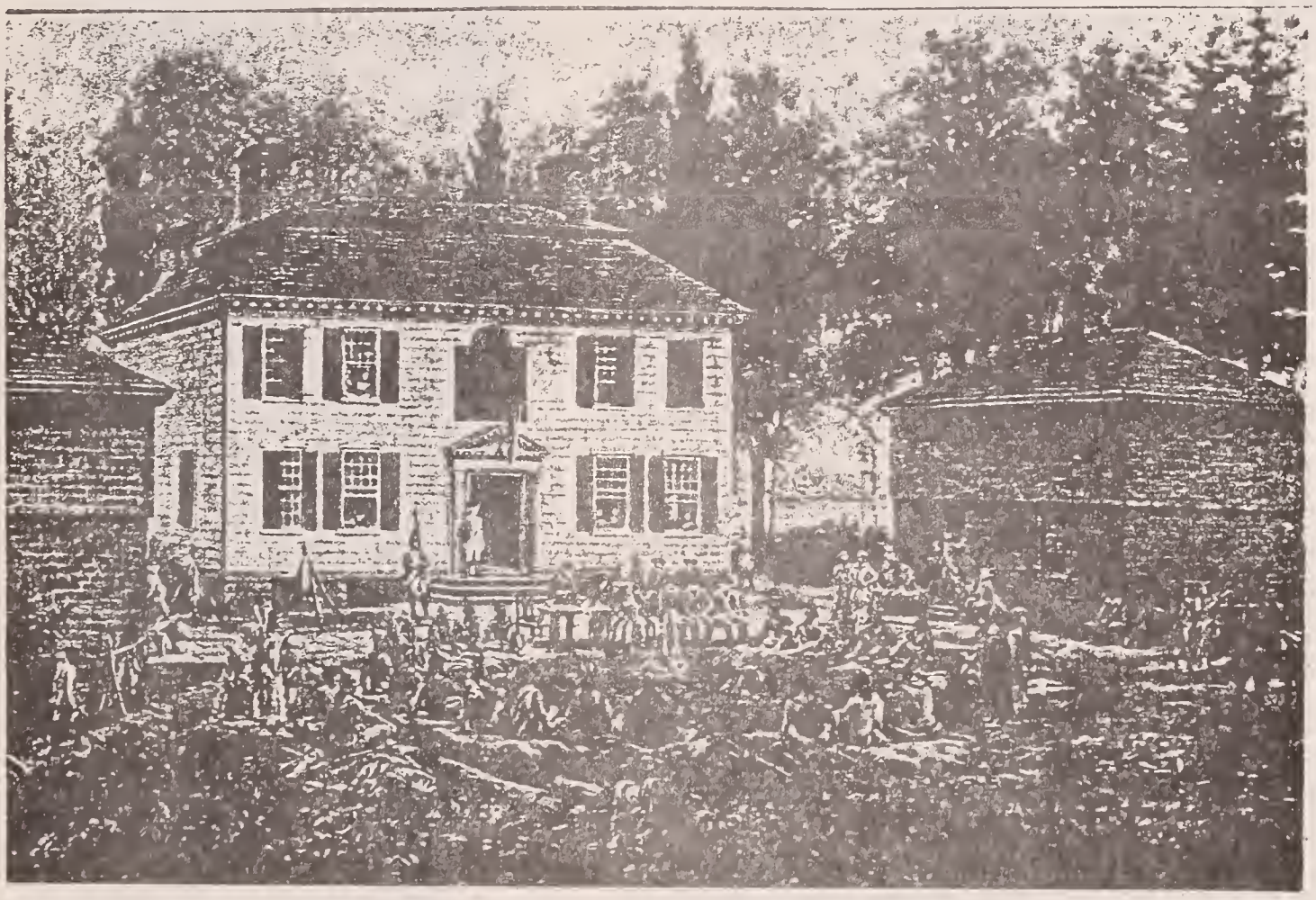
The New York State Historic Trust owns it and it is open to the public. At one time it was encircled by a stockade and was flanked by stone blockhouses.

One block house, to the left as you face the house, is still standing, used as a museum.

Sir William Johnson, First Baronet of New York

William Johnson's Houses, continued

Many Indian councils were held here and Indians felt free to come and go, inside and outside. Sometimes as many as a thousand people attended. (One is bound to wonder about the sanitary facilities. That mob would have generated one hell of a lot of sewage. On the other side of the coin - feeding all of the free-loaders sometimes required scrounging the countryside in a ten mile radius for supplies, all purchased and paid for by His Nibs, WJ.)



This is an artist's conception of what a full day at the Johnson house looked like. Note the soldiers and Indians and the council fire right in the middle of the front lawn. Do you suppose they tramped down Molly's begonias?

This is Johnson Hall today. I must say that the artist who painted the larger picture above was very good at details. But now there are no Indians, no soldiers, no council fire and, alas, no Sir William, no Molly Brant.

Sir William Johnson, First Baronet of New York

Military and Political Activities

From his first Mohawk Valley appearance as a young man, Johnson worked hard at convincing the Indians that he was an honest, honorable man and that the British officials he represented were men of integrity. Personally his word was his bond and was accepted as such, without question. but sometimes skillful oratory was needed to explain the shortcomings of others.

One of his greatest accomplishments and smartest moves was to acquire the lasting friendship and trust of "King" Hendrick, a Mohawk sachem. He is pictured at the right, standing beside a tree notched 39 times for enemies killed or captured.

Through many testing situations "King" was a wise advisor and a staunch ally. Female members of his family became intimate friends of William.

The Indians came to call Johnson by their name Warraghiyagey (He Who Does Much Business). This was meant to be complimentary rather than kidding about his acquisitiveness.

British policy was expansion westward but the means of doing it was left to the imagination of the Crown-designated commander-in-chief. A succession of these left something to be desired. Understandably any appointee was ambitious or he wouldn't have been standing in line for the job, but in some cases military brains and experience were absent. Some were political hacks, all noise and bluff. Some displayed intelligence; others seemed totally unaware or ignorant of what it was all about.

Since the French in Canada had an expansion policy too, directed south and west, there was bound to be friction and confrontation. Both sides recognized that the help of the Indians would be necessary for dominance. Here, then, is where Johnson came in, to enlist them as British allies or keep them neutral. To a large extent he was successful. The Mohawks were always faithful to him and then to his son, John, to the point of themselves being exiled in Canada, along with the Johnsons, after the Revolution. Many tribes preferred the sales pitch of the French and fought with them even when it meant inter-tribal warfare. It had always been their heritage to fight among themselves. A red man's scalp was meager compared with that of a hirsute white man, but a scalp was a scalp.

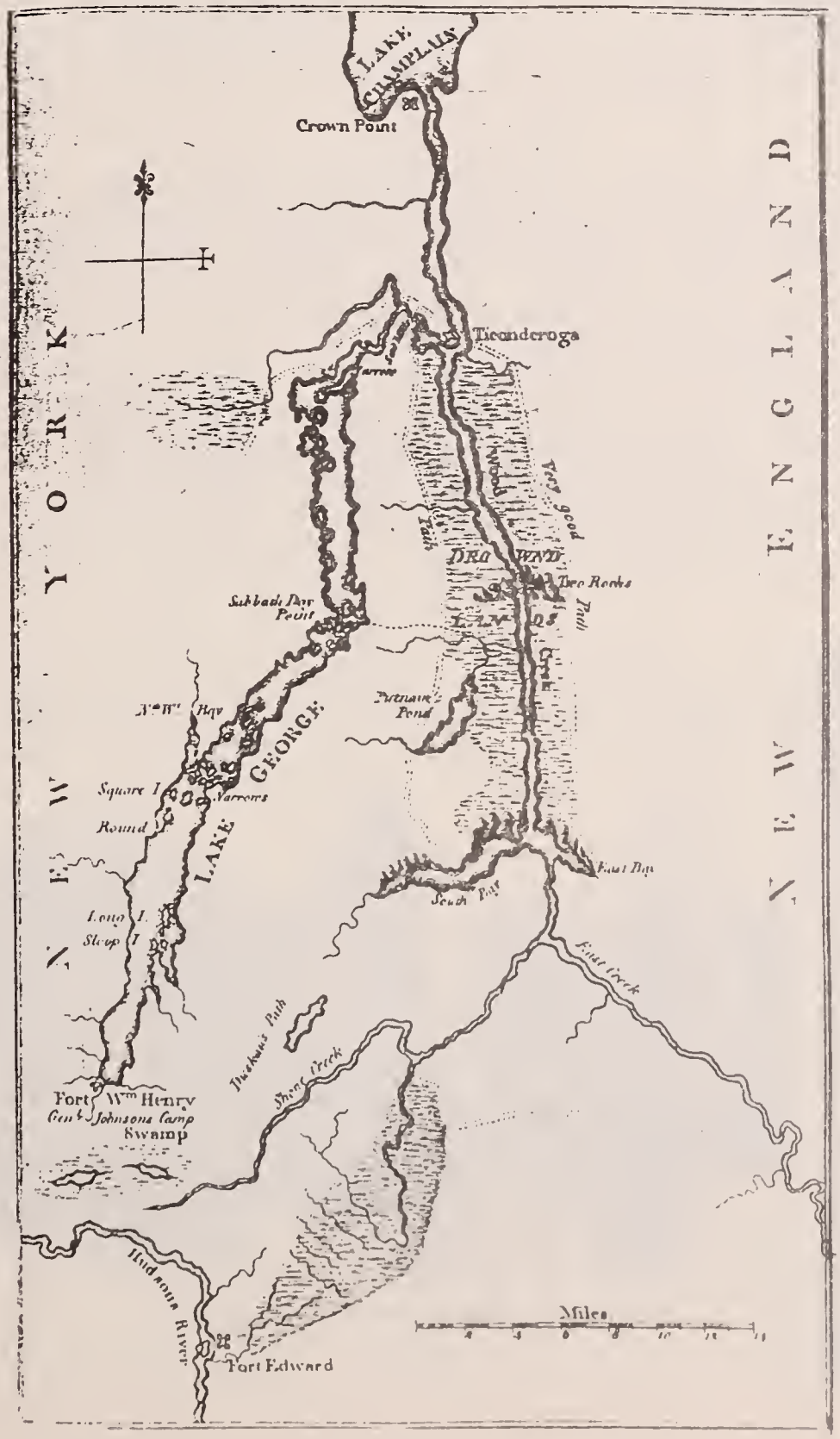
When the French threatened New York and the Ohio Valley, swooping down out of Canada in 1745, Johnson kept the Six Nations from joining the invaders. If the Iroquois had joined the French and their other Indian allies, it would have spelled disaster or extinction for the British outposts and even some towns and cities. In 1746 Johnson was appointed Colonel of the Six Nations and Governor Clinton of New York made him responsible for the conduct of Indian affairs, taking this job out of the hands of commissioners in Albany. Johnson took this assignment seriously and was constantly traveling among the native towns, cementing their mutual dependence.

Sir William Johnson, First Baronet of New York

Military and Political Activities, continued

In 1748 William commanded 14 companies of New York militia and a militia regiment of the city and county of Albany. As hostilities cooled off, he persuaded the Six Nations to bury the hatchet, albeit reluctantly. The sight and smell of blood and the fierce exhileration of battle had whetted their appetites.

Two years later, WJ resigned his responsibilities for Indian Affairs, although the Iroquois sachems urged him not to. Unofficially he continued his relationships with them, as he always had. From this distance this seems to have been a ploy on Bill's part to get something better,



The French never seemed to learn. Again in 1754 they began afresh, with their Indian allies, to show muscle in the interior, which England was planning for its very own. General Edward Braddock, an experienced soldier, came to America as a new Commander-In-Chief. He appointed Johnson a Major-General and gave him the sole management of the Six Nations and their allies. Just what WJ had finagled for.

Braddock devised a four-pronged campaign, (a) against Acadia/Nova Scotia under Brigadier General Monckton; (b) against Fort Duquesne and a follow up to Niagara, to be led by Braddock himself; (c) Governor Shirley to strengthen and reinforce Oswego and to attack Niagara, if Braddock was delayed; and, finally, (d) Johnson was entrusted with an attack on Fort St. Frederic at Crown Point.

Johnson immediately began to gather an army and a mountain of supplies for the Lake Champlain-Lake George expedition. He planned to build what roads were necessary from the Hudson north along the western shore of Lake George, bringing up supplies as the road progressed.

The expedition was making excellent progress when the bad news reached them.

Sir William Johnson, First Baronet of New York

Military and Political Activities, continued

Captain Jean-Daniel Dumas

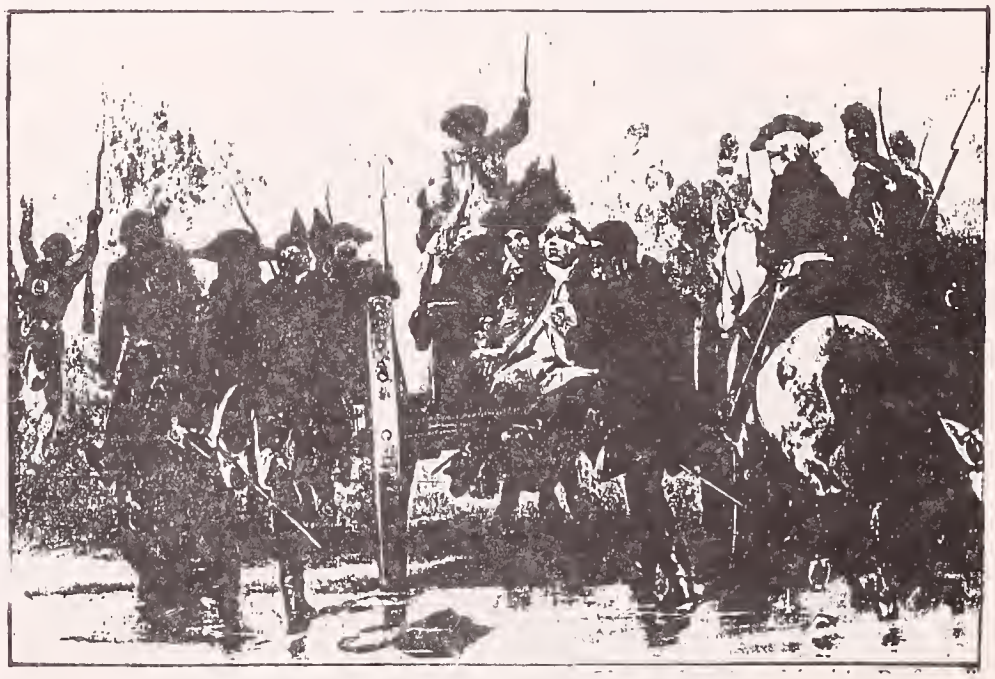
General Edward Braddock

Captain Daniel Hyacinthe-Marie Lienerd Beaujeu

Braddock had marched his veteran redcoats into ambush, eternal ignominy, defeat and near annihilation on July 13, 1755 at a Monongahela River ford in western Pennsylania. Braddock was not bright, but he was a brave man. Five [4] horses were shot from under him. The sixth [5 th] had its rider shot from the saddle. A heavy musket ball (about 3/4" in diameter) evidently fired at close range with maximum velocity, ripped through his right arm, smashed several ribs and lodged in his lung.

Captain Dumas, pictured above, was originally in command of the French-Indian forces but was himself killed early in the battle. Captain Beaujeu assumed command and demonstrated how to fight in the woods. The pictures below show Braddock fallen from his horse and being carried off the field in an ammunition cart.

Braddock Mortally Wounded



Braddock Retreating and Dying

Sir William Johnson, First Baronet of New York

Military and Political Activities, continued

Carried eastward in an ammunition cart, in a retreat covered by Colonel George Washington's Virginians, Edward Braddock died five days later. He was buried in the trail and all survivors marched across the spot to prevent the blood-thirsty Indians from finding the grave.

The army's baggage train, including a case of Braddock's papers and his detailed plans for the four-pronged campaign, was captured intact by the French. So much for strategy.

(Compiler's musings - There are few drawn battles, with a tied score. Usually a victor prevails and a loser licks his wounds. In their wisdom, historians name battles won or lost from the place of occurrence. But in this case the desire to place the stigma on a single man over-rode all other considerations. All United States kids remember Braddock's Retreat, but most of them would have trouble identifying where, when and why it happened. Certainly the official Battle of the Monongahela River or Battle of the Wilderness would be as strange to them as a phrase in Zulu. It is possible that a few might recognize the last name above, but ten to one they would be referring to the Civil War struggle. End of rant.)

The news of the loss of Braddock's proud army had a depressing effect on Johnson's force, camped near Fort Edward on the upper Hudson, ready to jump off for the north. William kept them at it, cutting roads and preparing rough stockades.

The French at Fort Carlton (Ticonderoga) were led by Baron Ludwig August Dieskau, France's premier professional soldier in America. He was well aware of Johnson's preparations. Since he knew that he was outnumbered, he planned a semi-circular move which, if sucessful, would flank the British and provide an opportunity for ambush.

Through a series of semi-comic events the ambush was never fully sprung, if indeed it was ever fully set. Some of the maneuvering on both sides seems, in retrospect, to have been extremely amateurish or even ludicrous.

The British forces, with incredibly good luck, finally triumphed, if you can call the enemy's retreat a triumph. Two regiments of brave French regulars stood firm and fought until they died, then the rest faded away into the forest. Baron Dieskau, twice wounded [thrice wounded] was captured. William was also wounded in the left leg [or hip]. The truth of the matter is that he probably got it in the ass.

Among the fatalities in the heaviest fighting were:

> Captain Jonathan Ingersoll (18 W - Chart J - 4th Generation) of the Westfield, Massachusetts militia. His body was taken back to Westfield for burial.
>
> Colonel Ephriam Williams, founder of Williams College, and Jonathan's commanding officer.
>
> "King" Hendrick, 80 years old, too fat to walk, wearing fancy British regalia, riding on a pony.

At one point, as the battle began, Johnson was in his cot with the griping bowels of bloody dysentery and a laggard sphincter, but he got up to join the fighting and to take his bullet. Baronet and Baron were in the same hospital tent; Johnson insisted the Baron's wounds be treated before his. Later Dieskau was taken to New York and put aboard a ship bound for France.

Sir William Johnson, First Baronet of New York

Military and Political Activities, continued

The French forces that survived retreated the way they had come, back to Fort Carlton. While the action at Fort George was considerably less than victory, even by default, the set-back did deter the French from making any threatening gestures against Albany and the Hudson Valley for some time. Since Shirley's shilly-shally tactics in hugging Oswego were accomplishing nothing, the projected attack on Fort Niagara from the east was cancelled.

The tragic defeat in Pennsylvania and Shirley's ineffectiveness left Johnson's exploit, however fortunate and indecisive, as one small piece of good news among a lot of bad. WJ had good public relations people working for him abroad. In November of 1755, he was knighted and elevated to the Peerage as First Baronet of New York. The Crown also granted him a purse of £5000. Later the expedition to Acadia by Brigadier Monckton resulted in the expulsion of a lot of French peasants who had been there for 40 years and never bothered anyone. This action drew a lot of criticism from the English people. There was nothing to rival Johnson's cautious derring-do.

Here is a picture of William in all the grandeur of his fancy robes and flowing wig of his new threads as a Baronet. He's still putting on a little flab.

Action At Niagara

In July, 1759 Sir William was in charge of 900 Indians in the army of Brigadier General John Prideaux as it invested Fort Niagara and laid seige to it. Prideaux, momentarily preoccupied, stepped in front of a British mortar as it was fired and, literally, lost his head. The command of the operation evolved upon William.

British troops and Johnson's Mohawks ambushed and destroyed a relief column coming north from Fort Venango. Most of the Indians in the original column had already deserted it, maybe because they did't want to take on the Mohawks. On July 26, the French surrendered the fort.

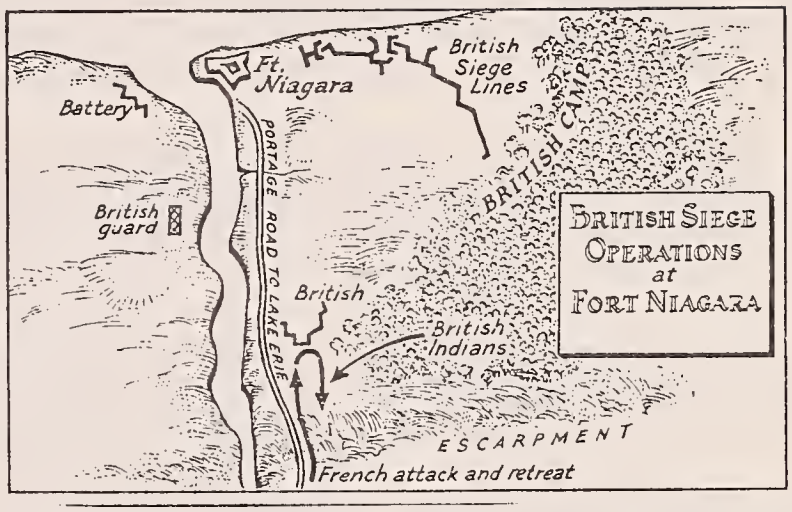
Johnson knew his Indians would like nothing better than to scalp every enemy they could find. He talked them out of it, provided they could pillage the place when the French left it. Under the terms of the surrender, the French garrison, fully armed and with two cannon (just in case), marched out of the fort to the lake where they boarded boats for the trip across Lake Ontario. Then he let the Mohawks loose and they trashed the place.

Sir William Johnson, First Baronet of New York

Military and Political Activities, continued

Action at Niagara, continued

We do not know exactly how the Mohawks came to agree not to massacre the defenders of Fort Niagara I have hazarded a guess that it might have been a tribute to brave men who had fought long and hard; we know that Indians of all tribes recognized and respected bravery, friend or foe. In any event, it is the first such circumstance I have come upon and I thought it deserved a little publicity, 250 years late. The small map at the right may give you a better idea of the physical situation. Many of us have seen Fort Niagara as tourists, casually. Think of it a bit differently now.



Action Against Montreal

In 1760, Sir William and his Mohawks were part of the force of Major General Jeffrey Amherst in its march to and capture of Montreal. Just below is a non-flattering picture of General Amherst. At one time, Amherst had suggested that efforts be made to expose Pontiac's rebellious Indians to blankets infected with smallpox. 18th century biological warfare! Most of his contemporaries thought it unethical. Some who did not worry about the philosophical aspects of the idea, were worried that it would backfire and spread the disease to British soldiers and citizens. Nothing came of it.

Amherst was not enthusiastic about the use of Indians and he personally disliked the "Baronet of the Mohawk." Their differences were exacerbated when Amherst, visiting at Johnson Hall, was forced to acknowledge "the brown Lady Johnson" (Molly Brant) as his hostess. The campaign was a success.

Again the Mohawks were forbidden to massacre prisoners. Some Indians, soreheads, (pun intended) exhumed bodies from the military cemetery to provide the scalps they thought their due.

After the treaty of Paris on February 10, 1763, which ended hostilities, Johnson was able to pursue his own affairs, but still maintained his close and constant relationships with the Six Nations. He was influential in settling Pontiac's War in 1764.

On October 24, 1768, Johnson called a grand council of more than 2000 Indians at Fort Stanwix (Rome) to determine a treaty line, to establish boundaries of the white men's and the red men's territories. While this was intended to be a permanent arrangement, I don't think a single white man expected it to be honored. If he said he did, he was lying in his teeth. Certainly the Indians didn't think of it as especially binding. Just a stop-gap.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Sir William Johnson, First Baronet of New York

Sex In The Six Nations

In the 18th century Iroquois men neither married nor engaged in sexual intercourse until the age of 30, believing that doing so would stunt, weaken and drain them, and make them unable to function with the muscular coordination demanded by inter-tribal warfare. Married men over 30 refrained from all sexual contact for some time before going on the war-path, saving their energy for their enemies.

This may explain why Iroquois braves, while naturally cruel to all enemies, were never known to rape women of defeated whites - they might scalp them, tomahawk them, burn down a house with them in it, march them 200 miles into slavery - but no rape. There was more fighting to do, no time for dilly-dally.

Ergo, there were a lot of unsatisfied Indian women around, eager and itching for service from a stud of Bill's caliber (pun intended), willing and apparently able, no matter what he had to do tomorrow, or what he had done today, drunk or sober.

These women had no moral compunctions; illigitimacy was accepted as normal in a matrilineal society. It was easy for Johnson to find accomodation from red-skinned ladies whenever or wherever he felt the need. There was no reason to worry about braves as cuckolds or irate fathers, who were even proud to have WJ consort with their wives or daughters. You were nobody if your woman had not been tumbled once or twice by Warraghi-yagey.

There is no doubt that he sired a hell of a lot of children. Some say as many as 700 Indian kids and scores of white ones. Others discount these tales. But remember, he worked at it diligently for 36 years. Of course there was no reliable scoreboard. It seems obvious that his bed was occupied by active and demanding "casual" one-night stands while he was already in a relationship of some duration and substance. While he made a display of going to church on occasion, or building churches, sending missionaries to the Indians and acting as a patriarchal leader, he never gave any indication that his sexual actions offended his religious beliefs, although they were known to grate on the sensibilities of others.

W.J. In His Prime

Of course, "not every romp made spawn" and Indian women knew effective methods of contraception or even abortion.

Sir William Johnson, First Baronet of New York

Sex In The Six Nations, continued

At each Indian village where Johnson stopped, he was met and greeted with respect. He was allotted the best food and quarters available. Each night he would be visited by several freshly washed and primped girls from whom he could choose a partner or two. This was done openly with no taboos or barriers. He could not refrain from choosing at least one maiden at the risk of giving offense. Of course not!

Later he sometimes brought selected officers with him, specifically to sport with the ladies of an Indian village. He thought them fully as desirable as white women and insisted that the officers treat them in a polite, considerate way.

At some point during these years of fun, sensation and gratification, William contracted syphilis, which had become of considerable concern to him at the time he first formed a relationship with Molly Brant. She was well aware of his problem when first she went to his bed, but she accepted it and never withheld her favors because of it. Indian medicine prescribed and applied by Molly alleviated his discomfort or even put the malady into remission. Since his last child by Molly, their eighth, was born in 1773, we know it did not affect his potency, nor her fertility.

Of course, no one knows how many women he may have infected.

Shortly after Molly presumably cured his fever and cough, William wrote to a friend, Peter Wraxall, about it. Peter replied:

> "I thank God the pain in your breast is removed. I hope your cough will follow. As to the rest, you deserve the scourge and I won't say I pity you."

Nor will I.

Sex In The Palatinate, Albany and New York

When Johnson visited Albany or New York or the Palatinate villages there seemed to be a veritable stream of females clamoring for his favor. Age and looks did not seem important - he was evidently as charming and rampant with a lonely and homely spinster as he was with a lithesome, full-bodied beauty of 18.

It's harder to explain the ease with which Will could seduce or consent to be seduced by Palatinate girls in Stone Arabia and German Flats or the Dutch and English in Albany or New York. Whatever it was he had, they wanted some of it and he was more than obliging. How he ever avoided troubles with betrayed husbands or fathers or beaus is not known, but today there seems to be no evidence of serious objections to his philandering. Of course he did not have modern media observing him.

There were some professionals among all these ladies. When militia was under arms the communities made such a fuss about their prescence that Johnson had to declare the camps off-limits to these working girls. I'm sure that they and their clients found ways to circumvent these restrictions. This regulation, of course, did not apply to WJ's quarters.

Sir William Johnson, First Baronet of New York

Catherine Weisenberg.

Catherine Weisenberg (Catty) was the daughter of a Palatinate clergyman who had given her a decent education for those times. At 14, she was indentured to the Phillips family, two brothers, neighbors of William Johnson when he lived in Warrenburg (or Warrenbush),

Johnson observed Catty in the Phillips' kitchen and liked what he saw, a buxom, blond, beautiful seventeen year old with a tempting derriere. Determined to have her, he offered one Phillips brother £5 for her indenture. Phillips refused. William said, "Let me rephrase that. Sell her to me for £5 or I will steal her and blister your hide with this horse-whip." Phillips, deciding £5 and no girl was better than a flogging and no girl, sold Catty's indenture. Thus William became her legal owner for a period of years. In explaining Catty's absence to his brother, Phillips called WJ "that damned Irishman."

[There was a story that the Phillips brothers bought Catherine's indenture at wharf-side in New York as she debarked from a ship bringing her from Madagascar.] [Johnson hired Molly from a Palatine family to work in his tavern as a clerk and bar-maid.] [Burke's Peerage said Catherine was the daughter of John de Wissenberg of Montreal.]

Maybe Catherine did work as a clerk or bar-maid on her first day but I doubt that she counted coins or beaver pelts or filled steins for long. Thenceforward, she was Johnson's house- and bed-keeper. You may find a statement that they were married by an Anglican minister. This was a fiction created long after the fact, probably long after 1755 when William became concerned about retroactively establishing the legitimacy of his son John so that he might inherit his Baronetcy.

William and Catherine had three children Ann, John and Mary, baptized on June 8, 1740, February 7, 1742 and October 14, 1744, respectively, in the Mohawk Chapel at Fort Hunter. These rites were performed by Reverend Henry Barclay. In each case the church record entry specified a "childe of Catherine Wysenberg" with no mention of the father. The Reverend obviously felt that anything else might sometime be interpreted as tactless or even an affront to Johnson.

It is generally agreed that Catherine fully understood when she came to Johnson's home, that the terms of the arrangement were at his pleasure. She would move on, perhaps with a payment but at any rate free of indenture, his responsibility to be terminated at a whim.

There is no record of Catherine's birth, baptism or death. Some sources indicate that she died a year after the Johnson family moved to Mount Johnson. [Elsewhere there are indications that she went to New York at William's request and did not return.]

The children were called Ann, John and Mary Johnson, Reverend Barclay to the contrary. No one worried about the marital circumstances of their parents until William was knighted and ennobled. In the opinion of many, including me, Catherine was married to William posthumously, or in absentia. The ring found on William's finger-bone, with Catherine's name and the date June 26, 1739, engraved thereon, found when WJ's body was dis-interred for reburial in 1840, was a lie. Oh, it was there, but it was certainly made long after she died or disappeared, whichever. William's will referred to Catherine as 'my beloved wife', an obvious afterthought.

Sir William Johnson, First Baronet of New York

Catherine Weisenberg, continued

[One historian says that William married Catherine on her death-bed.]

The scheme worked, despite its flaws in logic. Burke's Peerage [Debretts] recognized John Johnson's succession to the Baronetage of New York, proclaiming his legitimacy as The Second Baronet of New York, in 1774.

Ann Johnson married Daniel Claus in 1762. Mary Johnson married her cousin Guy Johnson in 1763.

Caroline Hendricks

Shortly after Catherine's death or departure, a full-blooded Mohawk girl, the niece of "King" Hendricks and the aunt of Joseph and Molly Brant became the children's governess and his housekeeper and recreational director.

[Caroline had been 'helping' in the house for some time while Catherine was still officially in charge.] William and Caroline had at least three children, but nowhere is there any positive mention of their names, birth dates or dates of death. One of them may have been Brant Johnson (Tagchuento) (Little Will) who was mentioned in Johnson's will. Caroline's post-Catherine tenure was at least three years but there are no specifics. If anyone knows what happened to her, they aren't talking. She just fades away.

[At least one careless historian, impatient of domestic details and accuracy, states that Caroline was William's second wife, that they had eight children and that she was present when he died. Shame! Shame! No such thing!]

Angelique Vitry

On November 25, 1746, a party of Johnson's scouts and a dozen Mohawk braves arrived with eight white prisoners and four scalps. The captives included a French militia captain, two women and three beautiful French sisters named Vitry. These were Catrine -22, Angelique -15 and Catiche -13.

Angelique was a breath-taking sight. The Indians offered the three girls for sale. William bought Angelique for £14. She stayed with him for about 3 years, then he sent her north to Montreal, over her heated protests, free, with an escort, to join her father and previously liberated sisters at Fort Frontenac.

(Dates tend to overlap when we talk about William's women. No one ever told him that one at a time was plenty. He wouldn't have believed it anyway.)

Sir William Johnson, First Baronet of New York

Molly Brant

Degonwadonti (Molly Brant) was born about 1735 in Canajaharie Castle, the daughter of a Mohawk man named Tehowaghwengaraghkwin and a woman who may have been a full-blooded Indian or a half-breed. The father died and the mother remarried. Her new husband, Aroghyadeeka (Nicklaus Brant) adopted Molly and her younger brother Joseph and gave them his surname.

In 1753 British troops were holdin a mustering and field day at Fort Johnson. One of the young officers challenged Molly Brant, a 17 year old niece of "King" Hendrick to ride with him. A beautiful, somewhat playful tomboy, she responded immediately. The sight of the lovely Mohawk lass exposing some leg drew the attention of Mr. Johnson. The account speaks of her "form of choice mold, beautiful roundness and symmetry." This picture shows Old Bill watching her intently; he was only 38 at the time but he is obviously putting on some lard, which probably didn't dampen his ardor. Evidently nothing came of this at the time.

[When Caroline Hendrick became ill while keeping house for William, her sister came to Mount Johnson to nurse her, and brought along her daughter Molly to help her. After Caroline died, her sister left, but Molly stayed with much work to do.]

[William built Fort Hendrick in 1756, at Canojoharie overlooking Nawadaga Creek and named it for his friend and ally "King" Hendrick who was killed at Lake George in 1755. Here he met and became enamored of Molly.] [There is another story just like this, but dated 1753, while "King" was still living.]

You've noted that I've listed the less likely stories first. Now comes the real stuff. Just checking to see if you are awake!

In 1756 William came down with aches, pains, fever and a cough. He had been on the road for three weeks visiting the various tribes and councils. For 19 days he had sat at tribal fires all day, arguing, talking, listening, drinking and for 18 nights he had been entertained with all-night feminine amusement. When he got home he was sick and beat. Someone summoned Molly Brant, who nursed him for several days, feeding him, bathing him and dosing him with Indian remedies. She also noted his growing problem with syphilis and began treatment of it. When Will was lucid he noted her smooth skin, pleasant features, wide brown eyes, her soft voice, her long dark hair, and fine figure. He remembered. And when William was well enough to get up, he got it up and headed back to bed, with company.

Sir William JOhnson, First Baronet of New York

Molly Brant, continued

From that point until his death, Molly Brant was in charge of William Johnson's household at Fort Johnson and later at Johnson Hall. While they were not officially married, they were married in the eyes of the Indians.

Molly became a strong link between the Mohawks and the British and certainly helped William in achieving whatever success he had in this regard. After William was knighted, Molly fulfilled the role of hostess in their home, with grace and dignity. She always presided at table with its many guests. Often she went with him on his meetings with Indian chiefs. She was with him when he died.

Molly and William had eight children:

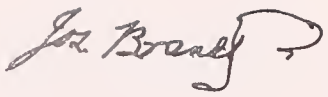
Peter Warren Johnson, born 1759, killed in a duel at an early age.
Elizabeth Johnson, born 1761, died 1794. She married Robert Kerr.
Magdalene Johnson, born 1762, died 1818. She married Colonel John Ferguson.
Margaret Johnson, born 1765, died after 1833. She married George Farley.
George Johnson, born 1767, died 1822.
Mary Johnson, born 1769, died 1813. She never married.
Susannah Johnson, born 1771, died 1795. She married Henry LeMoine.
Anna Johnson, born 1773, died 1818. She married Hugh Earle.

Johnson referred to Molly in his will thus: "..my natural children by my housekeeper Molly Brant." He bequeathed to her ample funds and lands to enable her to take care of herself and her children. Of course, all the land was confiscated by the Continental Congress in 1777. Molly went to Canojaharie and then to Canada with the other Mohawks. She lived quietly in Brantford until she died in 1795.

Sir William Johnson, First Baronet of New York

Joseph Brant, Thayendanehea, (He Places Two Bets)

Thayendanegea



Brant was born in 1742 while his parents were on a hunting trip along the banks of the Ohio River. His father was Tehowaghwengaraghkwin, a Mohawk Wolf Clan chief and his mother was a full-blooded or half-breed Indian. The father died and the mother married Aroghyadeeka (Nicklaus Brant). Joseph and his sister Molly, 6 years older, were adopted by their new step-father and they assumed the surname Brant.

(Hold on! Keep reading. This is only an outline of Brant's activities. I know you are disappointed but public libraries have volumes about him.)

He grew up in Canajoharie Castle. When his sister went to Johnson Hall to live, Joseph followed shortly afterward. Johnson adopted the boy, which led to some speculation that he was Joseph's father. (Presumably Nicklaus relinquished his prior adoptive role.) At 13, Joseph was with Johnson in the odd action at Fort George and at 17, he was with him in the unique victory at Niagara. He also fought with the British in their troubles with Pontiac.

In 1762 Johnson sent Brant to Dr. Eleazar Wheelock's Indian Charity School at Lebanon, Connecticut. After two years of study he was slated to act as an interpreter at the mission in Onaquaga, but at the time there was an ongoing dispute between the missionaries there and the Indians they were trying to Christianize. The Indians acted upon a clear and correct conviction of the Christian faith as it had been taught to them by those very missionaries who now sought to modify their past teaching to meet a current political stance. Johnson, a real decision-maker, immediately recognized the ambiguity in the missionaries' position and ordered all of them out of Oneida territory. Johnson was also the boss and no one was likely to forget it. So Joseph didn't get to do any interpreting at the time.

In 1765 Joseph married a daughter of an Oneida chief who was also the granddaughter of "King" Hendrick.

Sir William Johnson, First Baronet of New York

Joseph Brant, continued

His bride did not live long, and Joseph married her half-sister. Much later, after the decease of his second wife, he married a third time.

The pictures of Joseph shown along the right margin of these pages are as he was visualized by different painters and at different stages of his life.

Joseph visited England in 1775. He enjoyed his treatment there, had his portrait painted by George Romney and was accepted into the Masonic order.

In 1774, after the death of Sir William, his son-in-law and nephew Guy Johnson was appointed Superintendent of Indian Affairs and Joseph became his secretary.

The growing tension along the British-Indian border indicated clearly the need for a decision on the part of the Six Nations. They would probably have preferred to remain neutral but they were right in the middle geographically and politically. The influence of Sir William, even after his death, was enough to swing the Mohawks and others to the British side. The Oneidas and the Tuscaroras stuck with their neutrality for a while but, as neutrals, they were in an untenable position, neither fish nor fowl. Eventually they aligned with the Patriots.

Brant and His Mohawks Come to The Grand River

With Sir John Johnson, Guy Johnson and the Butlers, Brant participated in savage attacks on several settlements, including Cherry Valley, Oriskany and Wyoming. Later he protested loudly, as did the others, that he tried to prevent the brutal deaths of old men, women and children at these places. He even denied participating in some instances. Most people thought he was lying in his teeth.

After the Revolution was ended, Joseph and his Mohawks moved to Canada, since they were now personae non grata in New York. They were granted 800,000 acres of land along the Grand River in Ontario as a reward for their services and replacement of their lost territories. This grant consisted of six miles on each bank of the Grand, from its source to its mouth.

Sir William Johnson, First Baronet of New York

Joseph Brant, continued

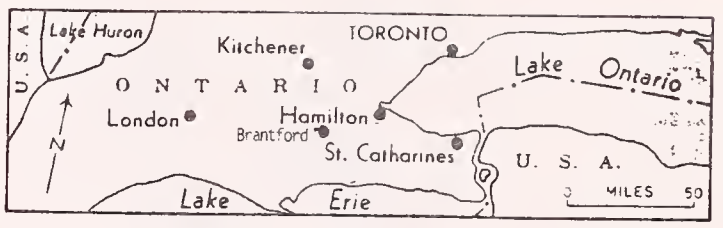
The present Brant County and the city of Brantford are parts of this original grant. The principal Mohawk settlement was at Brant's Ford, whose name was changed to the modern form in 1817.

From his three marriages, Joseph had nine children.

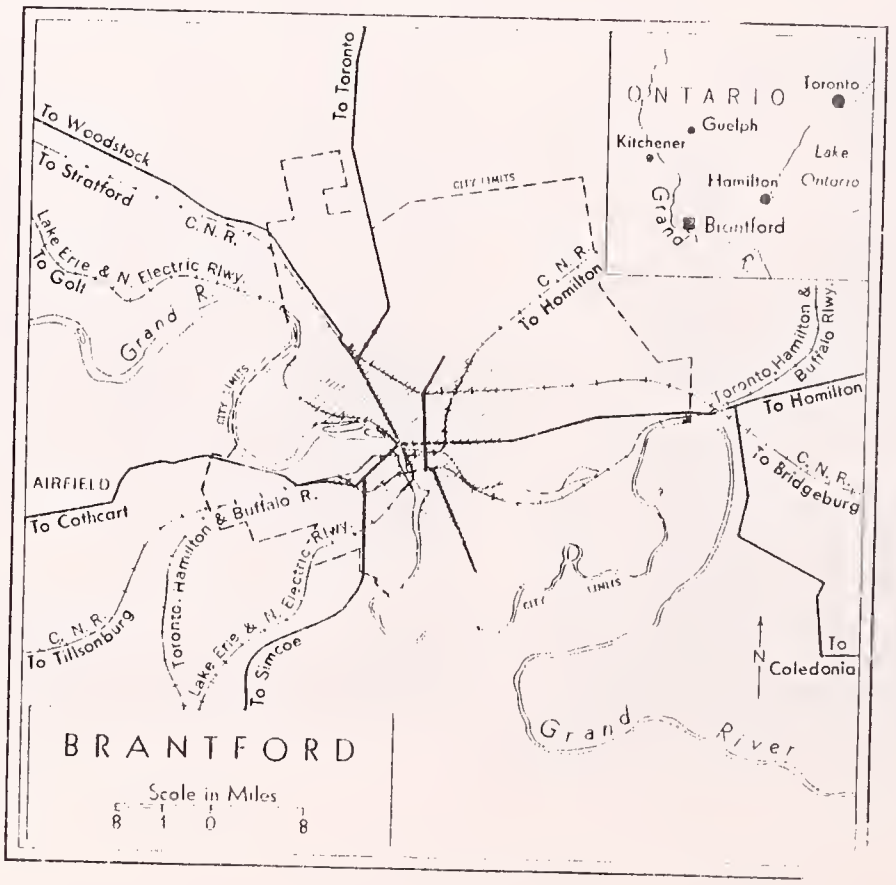
Much of his later life was spent in religious work of one kind or another. He translated parts of the Bible and other tracts into the Mohawk language. He built the first Episcopal Church in upper Canada, in Brantford.

Joseph Brant died at Wellington Square (now Burlington, Ont.) on November 24, 1807. He was buried near the church he had built.

In 1879 a doctor and some medical students opened the grave and took whatever remained of Joseph. There is no indication that his bones were ever recovered.



Oh yes! Joseph Brant was a good friend of Thomas Ingersoll who emigrated from Connecticut to Ontario in 1793 under a scheme concocted by Governor Simcoe. Parliament in London cancelled it. Thomas's son founded the town of Ingersoll, not far from Brantford.



The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Sir William Johnson, First Baronet of New York

Johnson vs. Weiser

William and Conrad worked in different and sometimes opposing ways toward a common goal - peaceful expanion of the colonies beyond the eastern seaboard. Johnson felt that this could best be done dy driving the French out of Montreal while Weiser strove mightily against the Ohio Valley encroachments of the same French. They were uniformly and precisely polite in their several meetings and in their correspondence. As men they seemed mutually to respect the other, even if they always disagreed. Whatever cooperation they achieved was with watchful suspicion.

The Younger Conrad

I imagine Conrad shuddered at the tales he heard of William's wild home life. William probably thought Conrad was a stodgy Bible-thumping old gent who needed a drink and a roll in the hay.

Conrad had already lived some time with the Mohawks before William was born in 1715. When Johnson came to America in 1737, Conrad had long since established his reputation with the Indians and the Pennsylvania government. Johnson had some catching up to do and he soon became the equal of Weiser in the Indians' opinion, if indeed he did not surpass him in that respect.

Conrad as an Old Man

Daniel Claus, a Wurttemberger, was first a follower of Weiser but Conrad appreciated his reasons for wanting to work for Johnson and did not oppose him.

Early on, Conrad had been given the name Tarachiwagon [Tarenyawagon] [Tarachawagon] which meant The Holder of the Heavens. In 1758 Will, then superintendent of all Indian affairs, forbade the Indians to address Conrad by that name. Whether this was in anger or envy we do not know, put it smacks of pettyness.

Conrad died in 1760, William in 1774. Had they lived through the Revolution they would have been bitterly opposed, I'm sure. Johnson could only be a Tory or Loyist. That's what he was. On the other hand Conrad would have been an active and staunch Rebel or Patriot, whichever way you look at it.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Sir William Johnson - First Baronet of New York

William Johnson and the Heeman Family

Eben Wiswell, in his FGA states that the Heemans "are said to be descended from Sir William Johnson and his Indian wife Molly Brant." The story goes that three daughters of Johnson and Brant came by canoe down the Susquehanna to the vicinity of Towanda, Pa. in 1797-98. They were all married, one of them to a Heeman,

A little earlier I listed the eight known children of William and Molly Brant. Six of these were girls; of these five were married (none to a Heeman) and the sixth, while single, was known to have died in 1813, unmarried.

I haven't the credentials to determine the truth or falsity of this; to no one's surprise, I am ready, nay, eager, to try. It is documented that Sir William had many illigitimate children, by many women, who carried the surname Johnson by right and proudly. In addition, in view of his high standing among the tribes, many Indian parents insisted on calling some of their children Johnson, simply in his honor. Thus there might be half-bred Johnsons and full-blooded Indian Johnsons. We should not, of course, exclude the possibility or even the probability that Johnson had illigitimate white children as well. Everyone seems to agree that the three Towanda sisters were half- or full-blooded Indians.

To recap: the three sisters who came to Towanda may have been:

Half-breed children of William and Molly
Half-breed children of William and some other Indian woman
Full-blooded Indian children of an Indian mother and an Indian father
Full-blooded white children of William and a white woman

To my mind, all of William's children were illigitimate, white or red, even to the inheritors of the Baronetage of New York, Burke's Peerage or Debrett's to the contrary. And in any event it isn't important. The known facts, however, seem to indicate that the three sisters were children of William and an Indian lady other than Molly. This seems to be borne out by the local tradition outlined below.

Anthony Vanderpool (Vanderpoel) came to Bradford County, Pa. about 1790. He was born about 1740 in Holland; his family came to America and settled in Columbia County, N.Y. He was a member of "the wealthy and respected family of Kinderhook, N.Y. and served in the Revolution." His nephew was Martin Van Buren, the 8th president of the U.S., the child of his sister.

Anthony had become acquainted with and fell in love with an Oneida Indian girl, known as Elizabeth Johnson. They were married. Since his family found this to be distasteful and made a big stink about it and dis-owned him, I assume that it was a recorded and legally binding marriage. Elizabeth was remembered as a "common-sized woman of dark yellow skin (?), pleasant countenance, slow of speech and fond of smoking." Anthony and Elizabeth became known as "King" and "Queen" Pool, leaders in a remote area of Bradford County which is called colloquially "The Pool." Anyone living there is called a "Pool" regardless of his legal name. Anthony died in 1839, Elizabeth in 1837.

With Anthony when he came to Bradford County were Isaac Wheeler, who was married to Elizabeth's sister Eleanor and a man named Heeman who was married to another sister of Elizabeth, name not known.

Quod erat demonstrandum.

Sir William Johnson, First Baronet of New York

Sir John Johnson, Second Baronet of New York

John was born November 5, 1742 in Warrensburg [some reputable references say he was born in Johnstown, N.Y., which was then a virgin forest, and was not created until 15 or 16 years later]. He was active in his family's affairs as soon as he was old enough. The Mohawks accepted him as they did William.

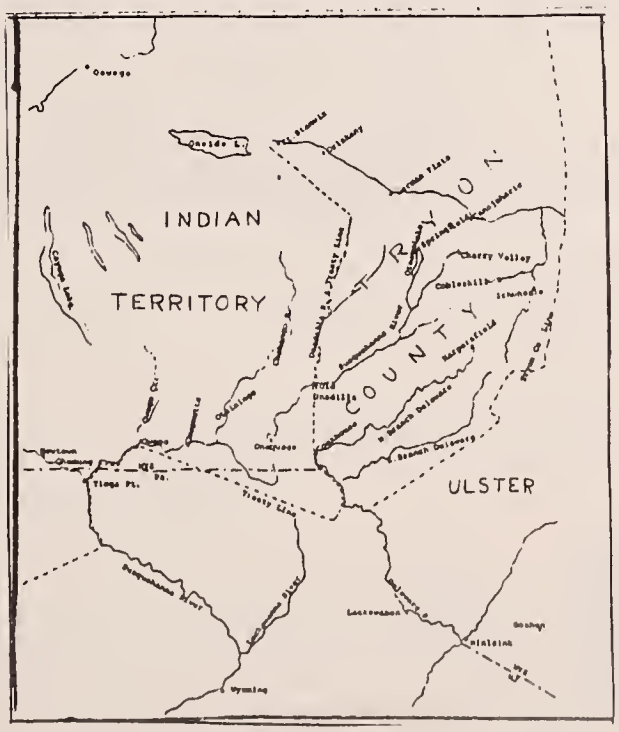
John was knighted in 1765, independently of his father's knighthood, in reward for his services in the French and Indian War. He inherited the baronetcy in 1774.

He was a Major-General in the New York militia in 1774 but reverted to the Loyalist cause at the outbreak of the Revolution as was to be expected from his father's son.

John organized a regiment of Loyalist troops from the many settlers in the Mohawk Valley who felt an obligation to preserve British rule on this side of the Atlantic. He led these troops in many actions; they participated in especially bloody raids against their former neighbors at Oriskany, Cherry Valley and Wyoming, in cooperation with John and Walter Butler, Joseph Brant and Guy Johnson. Like most of that bunch John declined to take responsibility for any nasty things that occurred at those places. Whether John could have prevented some wanton slaughter is moot to this day. I doubt that his hands were lily-white, but he may not have been as rotten a stinker as some people claimed.

All of John's property in this country was confiscated in 1777. After the Revolution he and his family settled in Canada, where he was given substantial grants of land. He became prominent in Canadian politics and social life.

In 1773 he married Mary Watts. They had eight sons and three daughters. John died in Montreal, Quebec on January 4, 1830.



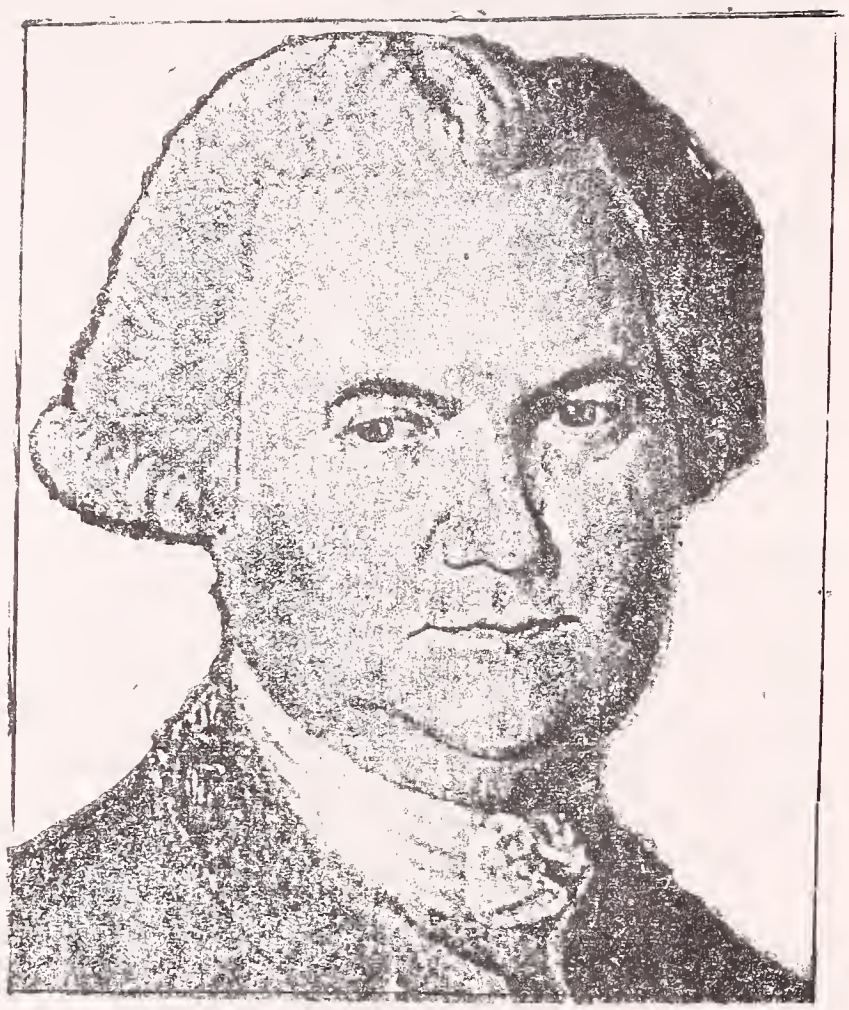
Johnson's Area

SIR JOHN JOHNSON, 1742–1830

Sir William Johnson, First Baronet of New York

Death and Burial of William Johnson

For the last ten years of his life, Johnson was in less-than-good health. On July 11, 1774, at Johnson Hall, he delivered a long speech at an Indian council there. He said he did not feel well and asked his aides to help him to his room. They summoned Molly. In his room he seemed to recover somewhat. He poured some wine and water, drank it, and sat down in his armchair. He leaned his head back, closed his eyes and died.



This picture, not very well reproduced, is from a portrait of him at the peak of his power and personal vigor. It has a sort of benign expression, as if just beginning to grin, the devil aglint in his eyes.

There were 2000 people at his funeral. The Indians wore black blankets, gloves and armbands. Sir William was buried beneath the Chancel floor of St. John's Church in Johnstown, which he had built in 1772.

This church was burned to the ground in 1836. In 1840 it was rebuilt in a slightly different location, but at the time the grave was not located for several months. In 1866 the body was re-interred under a large stone behind the new church.

When they disinterred Johnson's body, a ring was found on the bone of his finger. It was engraved with Catherine's name and the date June 26, 1739. They also found the musket ball which William had carried in his hip (?) since the battle of Lake George in 1755.

The ring disappeared in 1964 and was found in 1971 in a Bennington, Vt. warehouse. It is now on display in the basement museum at Johnson Hall. The musket ball is privately owned and is not exhibited.

Amen, William!

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

The Cowan Family

Background

Isaac Cowan was the great-grandfather of Elaine Ann Cowan Wiswell and the great-great-grandfather of Katherine Jean Wiswell Herrala and Elaine Anne Wiswell Alford, the daughters of Elaine and Eben D. Wiswell, Jr. They descended from Isaac through his son David Alexis Cowan, born in 1828.

Thaddeus C. Cowen was an older brother of David Alexis Cowan. I have no explanation of the differences in spelling. The "e" spelling appears in "History of Chemung County" issued in 1879 and reprinted in 1981. This Chemung County History states that the original David in Scotland was David M'Cowen.

Thaddeus Cowen

This picture of Thaddeus is from the history mentioned above. The mother of Thaddeus and David was Anna (Secor) Cowan, the daughter of John D. Secor, a Frenchman who came to America with Marquis de Lafayette and joined the staff of General George Washington. Hewas twice wounded and lived to the age of 96.

T. C. Cowen

The descendants of the Secor family were numerous. Some of them married descendants of John Ingersoll of Huntington.

Note: The name 'Secor' should be distinguished from the name 'Secord' which appears with some frequency in this recital.

Thaddeus was married, first, to Eliza Robertson of Norwalk, Conn. They had five children. She died in 1856. Thaddeus later married Mary Eleanor Mills of Wilkes-Barre, Pa. They also had five children. Two sons of his second marriage, Thaddeus and Newton, were veterans of the Civil War and both died as a result of that service within a year of their discharge and return home.

Thaddeus was a prosperous business man in Elmira. He died in 1880.

Carping By the Compiler

The Chemung History and FGA refer to the death of John Cowan (Second Generation) at the 'engagement at Lewiston Heights in 1812.' This tragic event actually occurred at Queenston Heights, across the Niagara River from Lewiston, in what is now the Canadian Province of Ontario. The invading American forces had come from Lewiston but there was no fighting there at that time other than the occasional landing of a cannon ball fired by British artillery in Queenston. There is a rather wordy description of these events somewhere in this archive.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Kith, Kin and Ilk

The Cowan Family

In a short piece about Thaddeus C. Cowen of Elmira, we quoted "History of Chemung County" to the effect that Thad's ancestors in Scotland were known by the name M'Cowen. This same article explained that the Cowens and the Cowans were all of the same family.

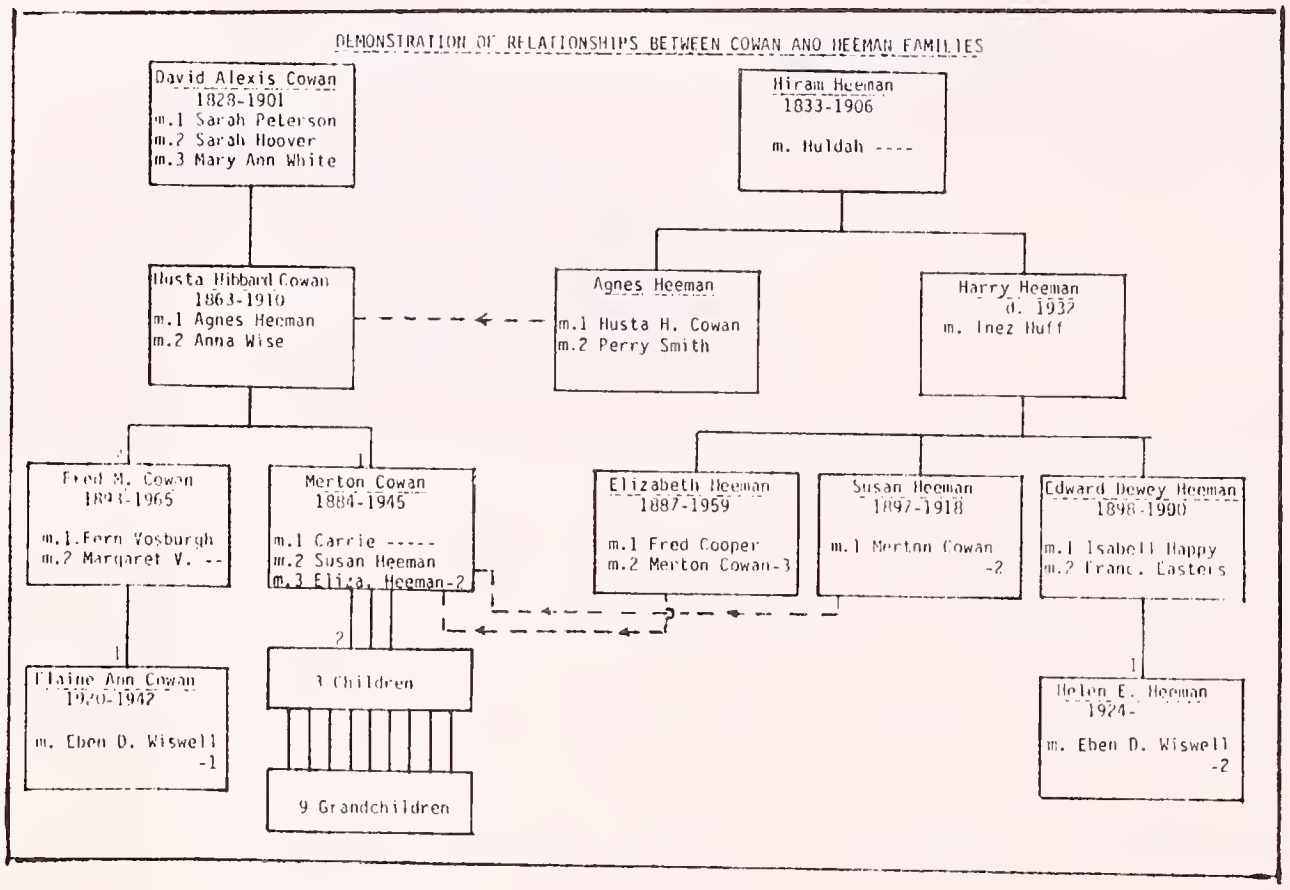
"The Etymological Dictionary of Family and Christian Names" by William Arthur offers two versions of the source of the family name:

> Cowan - From the Gaelic Gobhainn, meaning smith.
> Cowan - From Gowan - a Scottish name for a wild flower.

"A New Dictionary of American Family Names" by Elsdon C. Smith states:

> Cowan, Cowen (ir. Scot.) Dweller at a hollow; worker in metal, a smith, a corruption of Colquhoun, q.v. grandson of Comhghan (a twin).

We know very little about the Cowans other than what Eben D. Wiswell has outlined in his FGA. From these data we have constructed a chart, following, which delineates a distant and vague relationship between Eben's first wife Elaine Ann Cowan Wiswell and his second wife Helen E. Heeman Wiswell.



From this, it is evident that:

> Elaine's grandfather was Helen's great-uncle by marriage.
>
> The children and grandchildren of Elaine's uncle Merton were more closely related to Helen through her aunts and great-aunt than they were to Elaine.

Much ado!

The Founding Of Ingersoll, Ontario

Thomas Ingersoll (43 W - Chart J - 5th Generation)

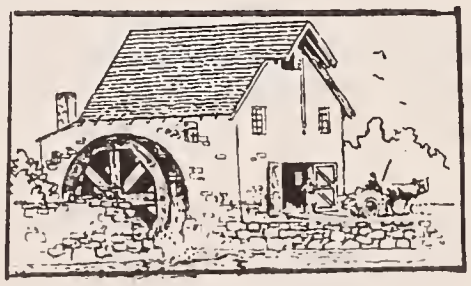
Thomas, a great-great-grandson of the first John of Westfield and a son of Jonathan (18 W), was born in Westfield, Mass. in 1750. He served in the Great Barrington militia during the Revolution as a private, lieutenent and captain and was made a major at the conclusion of Shay's Rebellion. He married first, 1775, Elizabeth Dewey, by whom he had a daughter Laura (of whom more anon) and three other cildren. Elizabeth died in 1784. Thomas married, second, in 1785, Mrs, Marcy Smith, who died childless in 1789. Mrs. Sarah Backus became Thomas's third wife on September 20, 1789. He had seven children by his third wife, including Charles. Eight of his children were born in Great Barrington, the last three in Canada.

In 1793, Thomas was attracted by an advertised proposition of Governor John Graves Simcoe of Canada which would provide grants of land for people who would bring a specified number of settlers with them. He visited Canada and discussed the desirable areas with Joseph Brant of Brantford. Thomas signed up with the Governor and in 1799 he had completed all of the requirements under the contract and had made himself penniless in building roads and making improvements. He was negotiating to sell some land for fifty cents an acre in order to provide working funds when the British government abruptly annulled Simcoe's agreements. Thomas, discouraged and broke, retired to the vicinity of Toronto (York) where he lived until he died in 1812.

Charles Ingersoll (87 W - No Chart - 6th Generation)

Charles was born in September, 1791 at Great Barrington, Mass. and moved to Canada with his parents and family in 1793. In 1817, Charles repurchased his father's one-time properties at a sheriff's sale. With his brothers he built a saw mill, a grist mill, a store, a potashery and a distillery. In 1821 he founded the town of Ingersoll, so named in honor of his father. This town is on the Thames River (then La Tranche) in southern Ontario, 18 miles east of London, 50 miles west of Brantford. One hundred and sixty-six years later, Ingersoll had a population of 8,494.

Location of City of Ingersoll



Grist Mill

Charles served as a Colonel of the Canadian militia in the War of 1812. He was a member of the Canadian Parliament in 1824, 1830 and 1832, a Magistrate, a Postmaster, Commissioner of the Court of Request. He married Anna Merritt on September 18, 1816. They had eight children. Charles died August 18, 1832, of cholera.

The Battle Of Queenston

Compiler's Prologue

Attention! How about a dissertation in depth on the causes, events and results of the War of 1812? Rest easy! I'm not equipped to do that, nor willing, but I am compelled to describe the Battle Of Queenston (or Queenston Heights) since "Wiswell" family members participated in it.

The general impression today is that this war was "unpopular." I can't conceive a "popular" war. But wars occur, the public be damned!

It was:

a politicians' war, poorly directed on both sides, fought by unwilling participants for reasons no one seemed to understand,

a foolish war that scarcely anyone needed or wanted, but, once launched, no one knew how to stop,

entered blindly and fought blindly by men out of touch with reality and out of touch with the forces selected to fight it,

a perfect example of how not to fight a war.

James Madison
President of The United States
1809 - 1817

War hawks Henry Clay and James Calhoun so incited Congress and the people that President James Madison was forced finally to declare war against Great Britain on June 13, 1812.

The United States was woefully unprepared. 30 years of peace had weakened the nation's resolve. A respectable army was authorized but existed only on paper. The hip-hip-hurrah spirit of the 1775-1781 militia was long gone.

To a large extent the officers involved (at least at Queenston) were inexperienced political appointees, brave and patriotic enough but incompetent. Often the lack of military experience led to incredibly stupid decisions and orders. Oh yes, there were brave men, lots of them. Others dishonored themselves and their country too.

The principal characters in this tragedy of errors were a strange assortment. Brief biographical sketches of some of them are provided, to enable us better to understand their quirks of character and mentality.

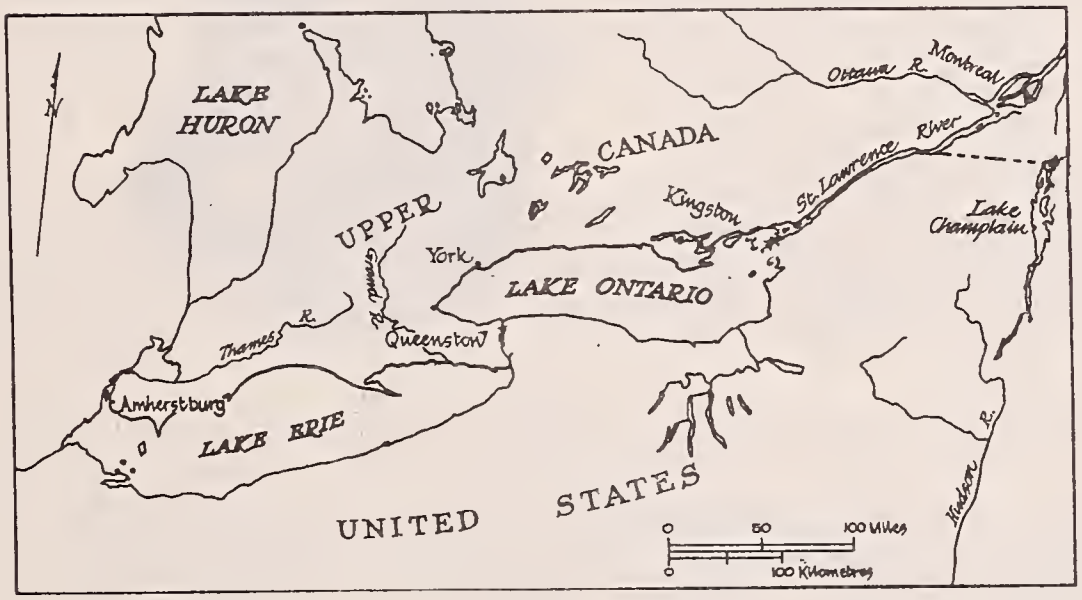
The battle was fought at Queenston, an Upper Canada village on the west bank of the Niagara River about 10 miles south of Lake Ontario. This was not Queenstown, as some historians seemed to think. There were plenty of Queenstowns in the British Empire, but this was not one of them.

There is the usual confusion among historians; there are contradictions, incorrect attributions, spelling errors, errors of place, time, direction and name. There are a picture printed wrong-side to, incorrect titles, the normal melange of mistakes. As you expect, I will make the most of these, but I'll try to get them on the table early so you can get the taste out of your mouth, ready for the piece de resistance.

The Battle Of Queenston

Who Were The Enemy?

Much of the ground war was fought in Upper Canada (the present southern Ontario), whose settlers, a large portion of them ex-Americans, did not invite the war, did not care about the issues, did not want to fight and above all didn't want other people fighting in their front yards or at their back stoops.



In this area 3 out of 5 settlers were newly arrived people of uncertain loyalties, lured from Pennsylvania, New York and Connecticut by promises of cheap land.

Thomas Ingersoll (43 W - Chart J - 5th Generation) of whom we speak at length elsewhere, came from Connecticut in 1793 - a late Loyalist - and he and his family members became staunch Canadians. His son Colonel Charles Ingersoll (87 W - No Chart - 6th Generation) a brother of Laura Secord, fought with the Canadian militia throughout the war. His son James, born on Sept. 10, 1801, carried dispatches for militia officers.

Many of the Upper Canada people were Loyalist fugitives from the United States who were exiled after the Revolution and settled on land grants from the Crown, or their descendants. The Secords, Johnsons, Clauses, Butlers were among them. Of course there were also Joseph Brant's Mohawks who were settled around Brantford and their descendants. Joseph's son John was among the Indians allied with the British at Queenston.

These Fought On Our Side:

This is a partial list of Ingersoll participants in this war, whom we have not mentioned specifically in this episode.

Joseph Ingersoll (491 W - No Chart - 7th Generation)- A militia man, he was taken prisoner and released the next day. This may have been after Detroit or Queenston.

Caleb Joiner Ingersoll (112 W - No Chart - 6th Generation) 1800-1868 - was a cabin boy on a schooner on Lake Ontario. His ship was burned and he was captured. After three months he was released on parole.

Panthus Dorchester Ingersoll (113 W - No Chart - 6th Generation) 1802-1876. A drummer boy.

Josiah Ingersoll (183 S -Chart D - 7th Generation). He served throughout the war in a Massachusetts regiment of the regular army.

The Battle Of Queenston

Sir Isaac Brock

Isaac Brock was born October 6, 1769 at St. Peter Port on the isle of Guernsey, the 8th son of John and Elizabeth de Lisle Brock. He entered the British army in 1785 and was a soldier the rest of his life. He served at many posts and in 1802 he was sent to Canada.

In 1811 he was promoted to Major-General and was made provisional Lt. Governor of Upper Canada in the absence of Francis Gore.

He was described as remarkably handsome, with a fair complexion, a broad forehead, clear, almond-shaped eyes of grey-blue (one with a slight cast), sparkling white teeth, sensitive nostrils, girlish lips, big-boned and powerful, a little over 6'2" [6'4"]. At 42, in 1812, he "was tending toward portliness and the flush of middle age was on his cheeks," but, in his own words, he was "hard as nails."

He was courteous and affable, popular, but aloof as a commander.

Brock was frustrated by civil authorities who prevented him from getting his own way, by his boss Sir George Prevost, who kept him on a tight leash, and by the Canadian militia who were untrained, untidy, undisciplined and unwilling. He was also frustrated by the civilian population who seemed blythely ignorant of the imminence of war, and by his debts, which he had assumed from his brother. He hated his job.

Isaac had no use for democracy; he believed those Upper Canada legislators who were first or second generation settlers from the United States were tying his hands - that they were treasonably preventing him from doing what he wanted.

He yearned to be with Arthur Wellesley, later the Duke of Wellington, in the Peninsular campaigns, to win glory, fame and promotion. He disliked Canada, especially York (Toronto)(population 600) with its pseudo-aristocrats, haggling legislators and untutored rabble. He was a gourmet, a lover of fine wines, an omniverous reader, a spirited dancer at society balls.

And, just as hostilities began, he had been given leave by the Prince Regent, through Prevost, to return to England. But now, duty called him more strongly than personal whim and he decided to remain in Canada. And maybe what he longed to gain in Europe he acquired in Canada, glory, honor, adventure, fame, and death too.

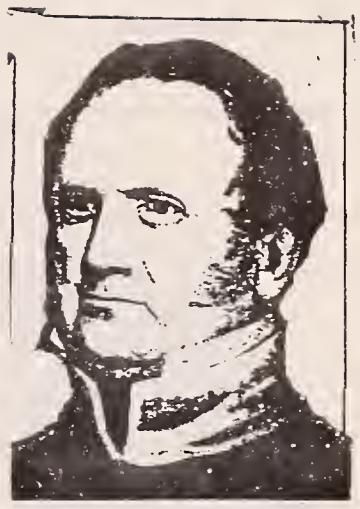
Brock was gazetted a Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath for his deeds at Detroit, three days before he was killed at Queenston. The news of this did not reach Canada until later.

The Battle Of Queenston

Winfield Scott

Winfield Scott was born in Petersburg, Virginia in 1786. A devoutly religious man and a life long teetotaler, he left William and Mary College because he thought his fellow students were not sufficiently pious.

He was a handsome man, 6'5" [6'4"] tall and weighed 250 [230] pounds. As a captain he called General James Wilkenson a coward and was suspended from the army for a year. (Wilkenson was called a lot of things by a lot of people.) He became a skilled commander and an able diplomat. In later life he earned the sobriquet "Old Fuss And Feathers", because of his love of gold braid, insistence on military discipline and his often pompous air.



As Brig. General

He fought at Queenston as a Lt. Colonel of the 2nd U.S. Artillery and was in command of the United States troops when they surrendered to the British. As Brigadier General, he trained and led American troops to victory and stalemate at Chippewa and Lundy's Lane, respectively, in July, 1814.

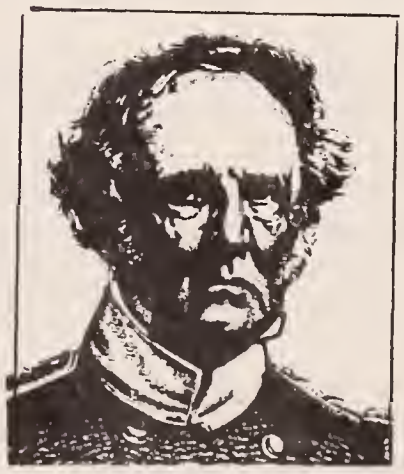
He was named Commander-In-Chief of the United States Army in 1841 and became a military hero of the Mexican War. In 1852 he was the Whig candidate for President, losing the election to Franklin Pierce. In 1856, he was promoted to Lt. General, the first soldier to hold that rank since George Washington.

As An Unhappy Civilian

At the outbreak of the Civil War, still Commander-In-Chief, he advised Lincoln not to send untrained troops too quickly into Virginia. The President, however, desperate to hold the North together and badly needing a token victory, sent the raw Army of the Potomac to Bull Run (Manassas) and a bad licking.

Lincoln did accept his suggestion that all southern ports be blockaded, a military device used throughout the war.

In 1861, at age 75, Scott relinquished his post and retired to live at West Point. He died there in 1866.



In Charge

Franklin Pierce - President Of the United States 1853-1857

Winfield Scott

Franklin Pierce

The Battle of Queenston

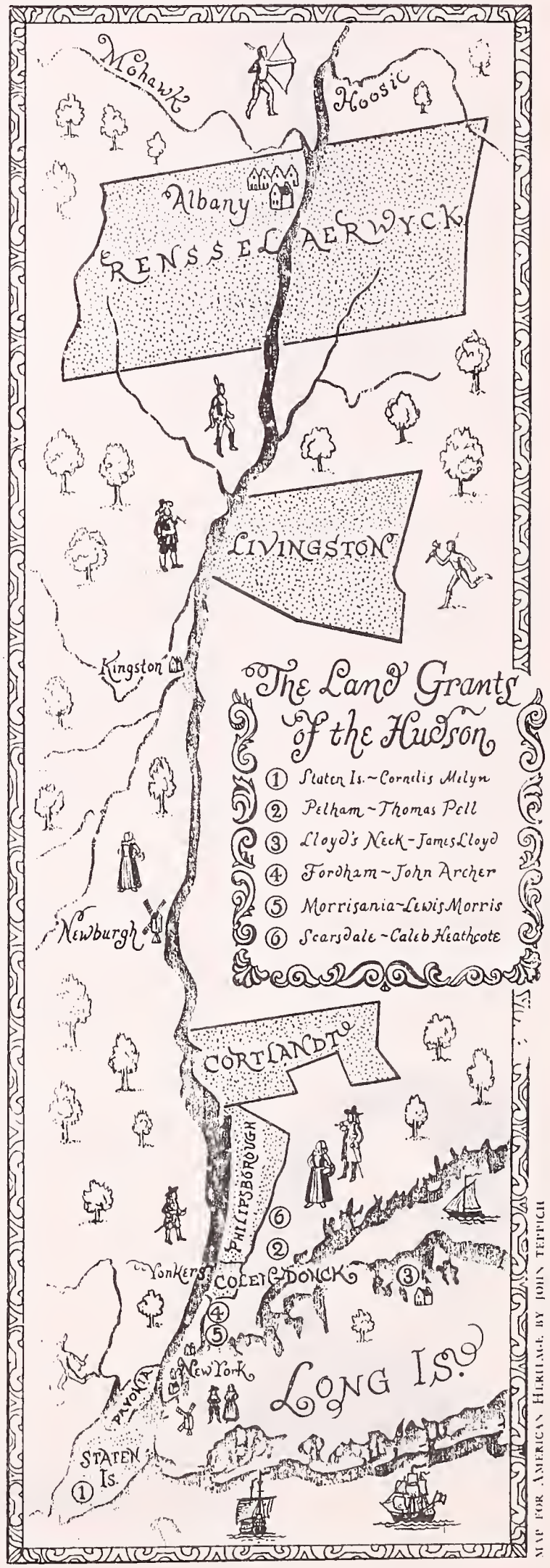
Stephen Van Rensselaer was born November 1, 1764 in New York, the son of Stephen and Catherine (Livingston) Van Rensselaer, 5th in descent from Kiliaen van Rensselaer, the First Patroon of the 1200 square mile Manor of Rensselaerwick (wyck) in Albany and Rensselaer Counties. At the right below is a sketch of the original

Hudson River Manors devised by New Netherlands. On the next page is an 18th century map of the same area.

Young Stephen graduated from Harvard. Later he became probably the foremost man in the state in wealth and social prominence. As a Federalist, he was active in politics and an unsuccessful candidate for Governor against George Clinton in 1801.

For the sake of brevity, I may refer to this subject as Stephen, Van R. or even Van. Okay?

Van was a Major General in the state militia but without any active military service. His political opponent Republican Governor Daniel D. Tompkins appointed him commander-in-chief on the Niagara front in 1812. Tompkins was well aware that Stephen intended to run against him for Governor in 1813, and thus placed him between a rock and a hard place, in the public eye, in a position in which he was very likely to fail.



The Battle of Queenston

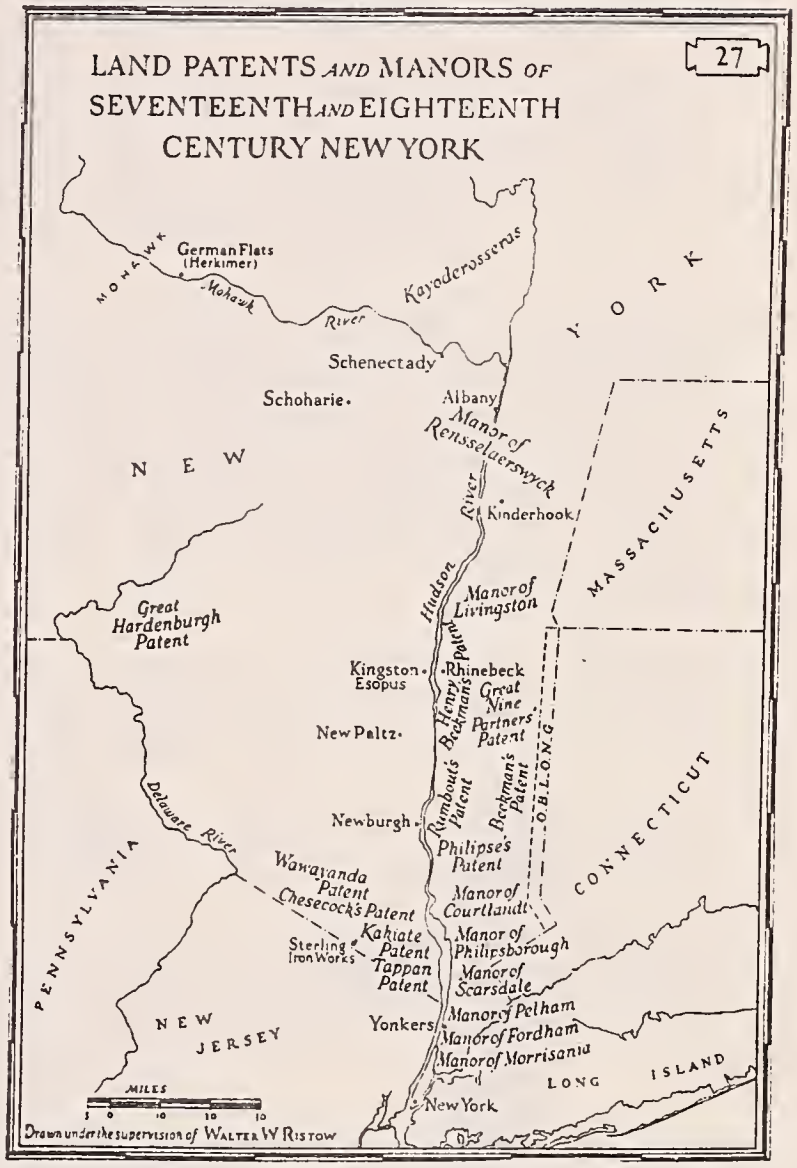
Stephen Van Rensselaer - continued. This, of course, would suit Tompkins to a tee, knowing that Stephen could not refuse without risking pointing fingers.

Ironically Van was totally and unequivacably opposed to the war, which he now intended, as a matter of honor, to prosecute to the fullest, even at the risk of his own reputation.

After Queenston, Van R. resigned his military commission. He ran against Tompkins in 1813 and sure enough he had his ass whipped. He served in Congress 1822-1829, at first filling the seat just vacated by nephew Solomon. In 1825, when the Electoral College could not find a majority for any of five presidential candidates, requiring a decision by the House of Representatives, Van R., representing New York, cast the decisive vote for John Quincy Adams.

Van Rensselaer, defying his historical legacy, by his leniency in collecting tithes and rents from his tenants on the Manor, encouraged the renters in actions which eventually resulted in the collapse of the patroon system.

In spite of his wealth and position, he was a man of simple tastes, democratic behavior, genial manner, his life-long integrity never challenged. He was married twice and had 12 children. He died January 26, 1839.



In 1824 he founded the school that became Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1826. He was a strong advocate and supporter of the Erie Canal.

Some historians spell the name incorrectly. It sometimes appears in print as Renssalear, which members of the family probably hated. Natives of that part of the state are sensitive about it and delight in correcting out-of-staters who spell poorly.

The Battle Of Queenston

Sir Roger Hale Sheaffe, Bart. was born in Boston, Massachusetts on July 15, 1763, the son of William and Susannah Sheaffe, who were Tories or Loyalists. The circumstances are not known, but as a child, Roger was adopted by Hugh, Lord Percy, the British general who led the redcoats from Lexington to safety in Charleston on April 19, 1775. This is described in an earlier chapter of this archive. I'm sure you remember, vividly.

Roger was commissioned in the British Army in 1778. He served during the last years of the Revolution, then on the continent and eventually in Canada. In 1812 he was living in Canada, retired on half-pay, and was recalled to active service. He was a Major General at the time Brock was killed at Queenston and succeeded him as commander of the military forces and as Administrator of Upper Canada.

Sheaffe led the relief column of Canadian militia and British regulars that brought about the surrender of the American forces who had attempted to capture Queenston and its Heights. For his exemplary service he was created a Baronet.

Roger became a Lt. General in 1821 and a full General in 1828. He married Margaret Coppin of Quebec in 1810. He died in Scotland July 17, 1851.

Solomon Van Rensselaer was born August 6, 1774 in Rennselaer County, New York. the son of Henry Kiliaen van Rensselaer and his wife Alida (Bradt) van Rensselaer The later Rensselaers capitalized the Van; some of the earlier ones did not. He served in the United States Army 1792-1800 and was honorably discharged as a Major on June 15, 1800. He was adjutant-general for New York 1801-1809, 1810-1811, 1813-1821.

As a young man he was involved in a number of quarrels with prominent people, brought on by his penchant for sharp criticism.

When uncle Stephen Van Rensselaer was appointed Major General of the New York militia in 1812, Solomon became his aide-de-camp as a condition of Stephen's acceptance of the assignment. The elder Van Rensselaer made no bones about his lack of real military experience and Solomon actually became his right-hand man with the rank of Lt. Colonel.

After the War of 1812, recovered from his multiple wounds, Solomon held a number of political positions, served a couple of terms in Congress and held the job of Postmaster of Albany for many years, being in and out of office depending upon the administrations in power in Washington.

Solomon attended the Whig convention in 1839 as a delegate from New York and claimed credit for swinging the nomination to William Henry Harrison. He was married on January 17, 1797 to his cousin, Harriet Van Rensselaer. They had several children. He died April 22, 1852.

The Battle Of Queenston

William Wadsworth, a wealthy farmer from Genesee County, was appointed Brigadier General of militia in 1812 and was still only a farmer, albeit rich.

The Wadsworth progenitors came from England to North America in 1632, settling first in New England. About 1790, William and James Wadsworth came to the Genesee River and acquired land, land galore. They chopped and sawed wood, plowed fields, raised cattle and grew hemp. William, a burly, hawk-nosed, blustering man was the elder. James was much more genteel than his brother. Together they came to own over 35,000 acres , a large part them still owned by the Wadsworth family.

The Duke de la Rochefoucald Liancourt, first gentleman to the court of Louis XVI before that gentleman lost his head, traveled extensively in this country and wrote of his experiences. He spent a night at the Wadsworth dwelling and described it as a "small loghouse, as dirty and filthy as any I have seen." He speculated whether the offensive smell "... proceeded from cats or decayed stores which the Captain (William) is reported to keep sometimes until they become putrified."

It was said that William kept a Negro wench to comb his hair and perhaps to perform other more personal services.

When William was appointed he protested that he knew nothing of military life, with no idea how to discharge its responsibilities even if he knew what they were. He was a proud man, too, extremely careful to keep facing the enemy, saying, "I have no notion that a Wadsworth should be shot in the back."

Regardless of his protestations of inability, he commanded well and sensibly, fought bravely and displayed a fine repertoire of profanity in cursing the laggard American troops who refused to cross the river to aid their comrades sorely beset on the west bank. And with equal fervor he orally lashed those who had crossed and then refused to fight.

One commentator said the general's language is "the worst in the whole American Army." Someone stated that he was the most eloquently profane man he had ever heard. I think Wadsworth would have relished those remarks.

150 years after the battle of Queenston, a descendant Wadsworth said, "I think it was old General Bill who was responsible for the Army regulation that prohibits officers from cursing their men. It was said that his declamation at Queenston was not merely accomplished, it was inspired!" Family pride!

William was captured at the battle's end, probably still swearing a blue streak. His brother James, when he heard of William's capture, hurried to Lewiston, exerted pressure exactly as needed and secured his early release. This was probably no great concession since General Roger Sheaffe was exceptionally lenient in paroling members of the militia who were captured.

Back home (more comfortable now, well aired) William hung his sword over the mantel-

The Battle of Queenston

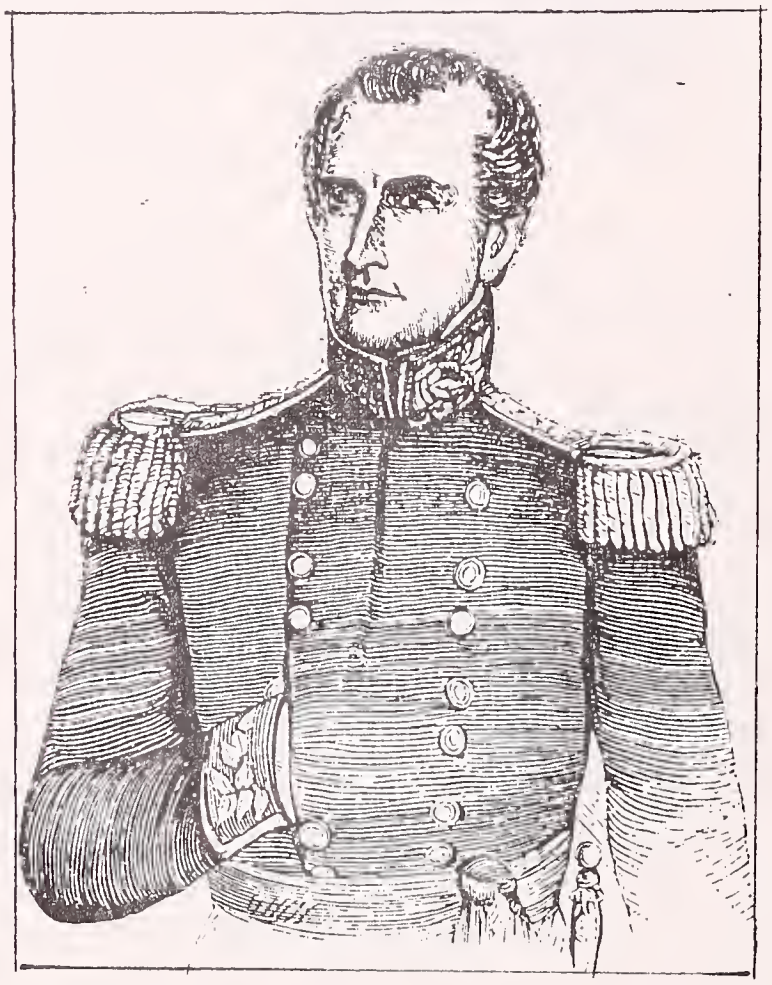
William Wadsworth - piece and left it there in accordance with his parole, except for local parades when he strapped it on again for a little while. But I'll bet the old rascal never forgot how to swear.

The picture on the preceding page in not one of Old Bill, of course. It was originally intended as a lampoon of appointed militia officers. I think William would have agreed with its intent. He was a reluctant soldier and he didn't care who knew it. No one wanted to argue with him.

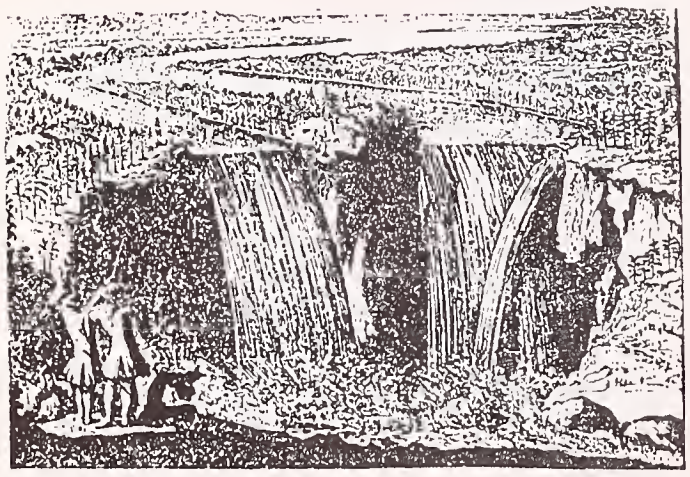
John Ellis Wool was born February 29, 1784, a leap-year baby, in Newburgh, N.Y. His parents died when he was about four and he then lived with his grandfather in Schaghticoke, N.Y. He held a variety of jobs as a youth and as a young man. When war broke out in 1812 he raised a company of volunteers in Troy, N.Y. On April 14, 1812 he was commissioned a captain in the 13th Infantry. His exploits at the battle of Queenston are described elsewhere.

He was promoted through grades to inspector-general in 1816, and was named to brevet-brigadier in 1826 after ten years in grade. This became his regular rank in 1841. John E. served with distinction in the Mexican War and retired as a Major General in 1863. He died in 1869 at the age of 85. Evidently his wounds healed well.

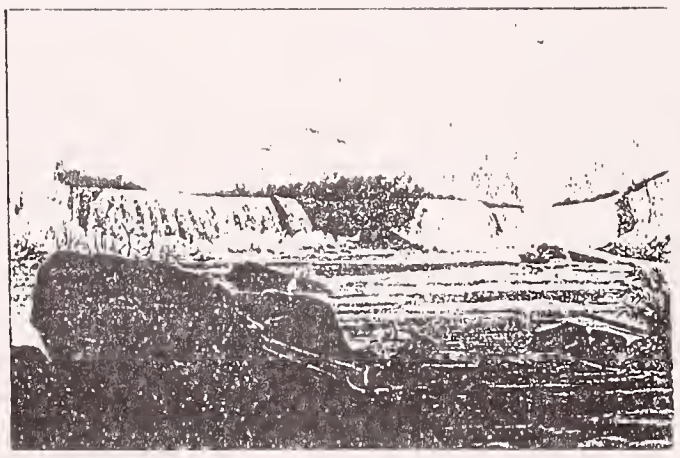
A 75 foot monument was erected in Wool's honor in Troy. He married Sarah Moulton on September 27, 1810. She survived him by four years.



Some Older Views of Niagara Falls



Described in British newspapers as "perhaps the greatest curiosity in nature." A woodcut after Hennepin, who visited the Falls in 1679.



A general view of Niagara Falls from the Canadian side; after an 18th century French lithograph.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

The Battle of Queenston

Alexander Smyth, born in Ireland in 1765, was brought to Virginia by his father, a parish rector, in 1775. He became a lawyer and a representative in the State's Lower House. In 1808 he obtained a commission as Colonel of a Rifle Regiment. If you can't read the fine print under the picture, I'll repeat it.

"Alexander Smyth, 1765-1880, commander at Black Rock, from the portrait by Saint Memin in the New York Public Library.

Alexander Smyth, 1765–1880, commander at Black Rock, from the portrait by Saint Memin in the New York Public Library

If this caption were true, Smyth would have been more famous for his age than for his mis-deeds. The following quote may provide a good idea of Smyth's reputation among his contemporaries.

"The word 'vanity' hardly does justice to his own concept of himself. He is wholly self-centered. His actions and words, which others find bizarre and ridiculous, are to him the justifiable responses of a supreme commander who sees himself as the savior of the nation. News papers scoff at him as "Alexander the Great" and "Napoleon II", which Smyth takes as a compliment."

Of course, his most popular nickname was"Apocalypse", which came from his commentary on the Book of Revelations.

In 1811 he prepared a volume of proposed army regulations copied largely from earlier French manuals. It was criticized as "no more than a very injurious mutilation of the French infantry system." In spite of this failure, Alexander was promoted to Brigadier General in 1812, assigned to command of the regular army forces at Buffalo. He arrived there September 29, 1812. He delayed reporting to Van Rensselaer and then did it in writing, a breach of military protocol and courtesy. Alexander, who thus far was only a "word" soldier, could not conceive reporting to, much less obeying, a militia officer, even a Major General.

Van Rensselaer's officers laid out plans for a two-pronged attack, showing Smyth the role he was to play. He would have no part of it; he wouldn't discuss it; he refused to do it. Thus far he had been able to bluff and buffalo (sic) his superior officer and get away with it. Van R. was so unsure of himself and his position that he failed to put this snotty punk in his place. The two never met.

In 1813, when Van Rensselaer resigned, Smyth succeeded him as commander-in-chief on the Niagara frontier. He fought several "word" battles quite vigorously. Finally he was forced to initiate some action and he made an ass of himself. He was relieved of command and disappeared into history. Good!

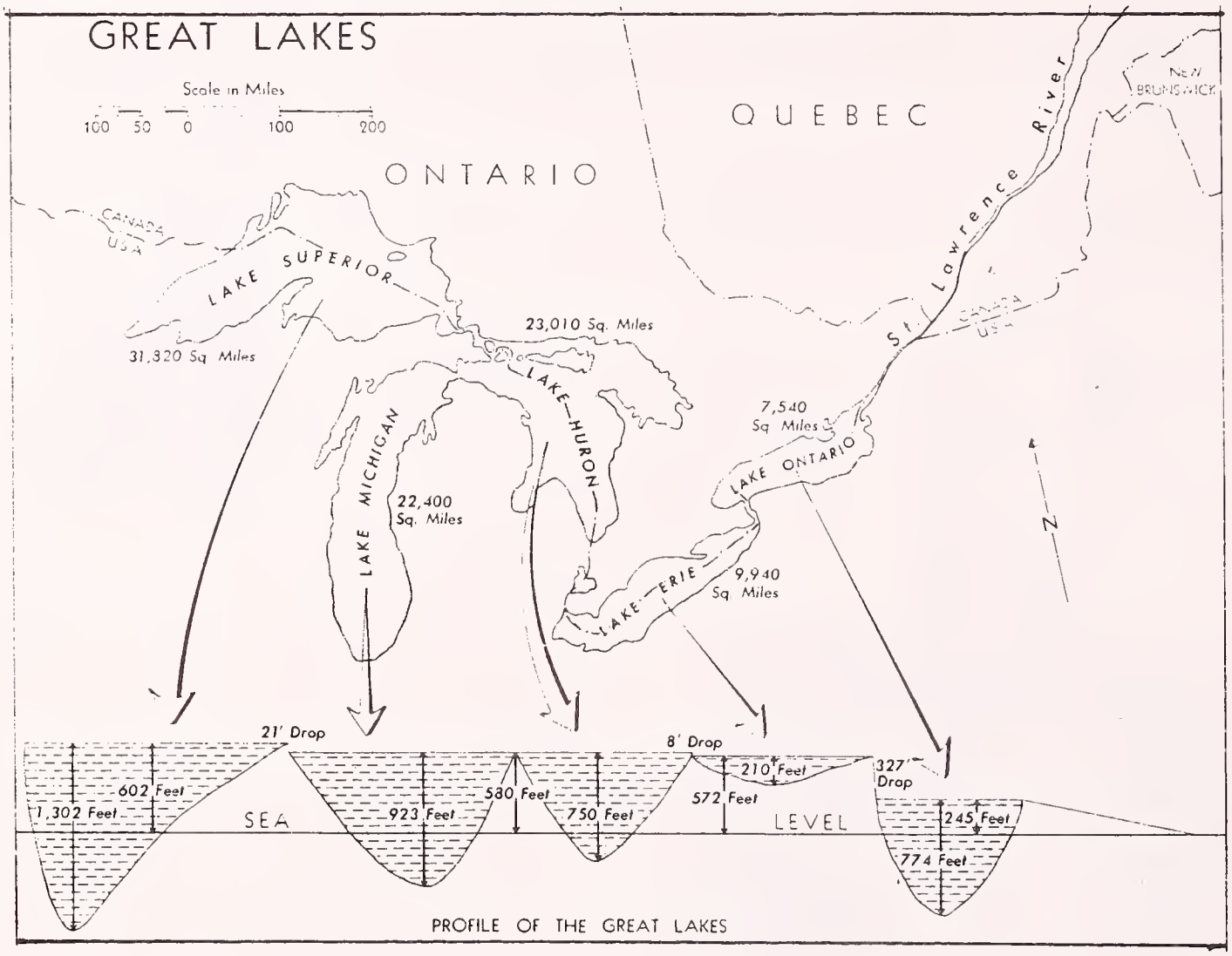
Smyth had no use for militia, even if he was in no position to throw stones. After Queenston, he had this to say about the militia present at that fiasco. It was "a caution against relying on crowds, who go to the banks of Niagara to look at a battle as a theatrical exhibition; who, if they are disappointed at the sight, break their muskets, or if they are without rations for a day, desert."

Alexander was a jerk but he could see the faults in others and did not hesitate to express what he thought.

The Battle Of Queenston

Setting The Scene - The Mighty Niagara

The Great Lakes region was a principal area of conflict in the War of 1812. Combined, the lakes form the largest body of fresh water in the world, draining 300,000 square miles of Canada and the United States. The international date line bisects each lake except Michigan, which is wholly within the United States.



This map outlines the lakes and provides data as to areas, depths and heights above sea level. Water flow is west to east. The unused and unevaporated water above normal levels in the western lakes drains finally into Lake Ontario, through the Niagara River. This short waterway connects eastern Erie and western Ontario, flowing 35 miles northward, splitting to encircle Grand Island, the branches joining about five miles above the Falls. All of Grand Island is within the United States.

The map on the next page shows the river's abrupt right angle bend at the Falls, 20 miles from Lake Erie. Here all that pounding water, since the Ice Age , has been eroding the rock below the falls to form a gorge 250' to 275' deep, 7 miles long. Every year the Falls move 36" southward. In 25,000 years the Falls will be at Buffalo, 25 miles wide.

The combined cataracts, over a 3200' brink, perpetually plunge 170-190' at the rate of 30,000,000 tons of water every unceasing hour. This tremendous mass is immediately compressed into a 250 yard wide water-eroded gorge with walls 275' high. The water traverses this great 7-mile slash in the land in a violent, tumbling, inexorable rush.

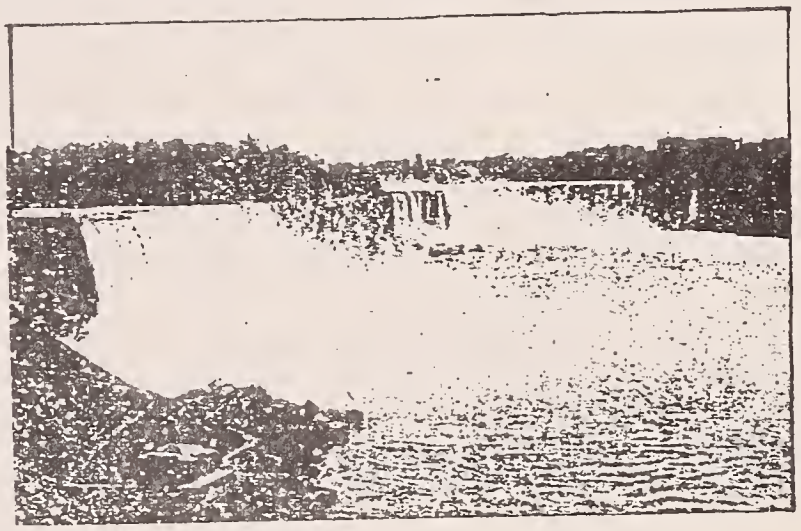
At Queenston-Lewiston, the frowning escarpment cliffs (margin of an Ice Age glacial lake) fall away to the lower banks of a wider stream bed. Here the water's frantic, blind, rushing flow subsides a little, as if wanting to linger a bit before disappearing in Lake Ontario.

The Battle Of Queenston

Setting The Scene - The Mighty Niagara, continued

This map may help in identifying features of the river and the settlements on its banks. Many of the places shown here will appear in the narrative of the actual battle, without specific georgaphic placement.

Just below is an uncluttered view of the Falls as they are today. Of course, the deepest curve of the Horseshoe Falls is obscured.



The following picture of the Falls was engraved about 1837 by William Henry Bartlett. It was about this time that it became a tourist attraction and the Terrapin Tower was erected. It looks scary to me. Evidently the only access to the Tower is by means of the rickety catwalk over the water from the bank out to the brink.

There are people on the catwalk, at the base of the Tower and on the railed lookout spot near its top.

These are all pretty silly people, I think, but the prize idiot is the jackass on the catwalk's very tip. And waving his arms? Aarrg!

The compiler lived in Buffalo or environs for many years, but the only times we went to the Falls were when guests came who were curious about them. I regret that.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

The Battle Of Queenston

The Black Magic of Niagara - A Personal Reminiscence

120 years after the battle of Queenston, I stood on the Niagara River Bank, on the American side, opposite Queenston Heights. The battle fought there so many years ago was, to me, a vague memory of a few paragraphs in a history text book.

I was awed, and a little frightened, by the speed and power of the water. I hardly dare test its temperature with a forefinger, afraid to get too close to it, mesmerized, the massive movement of the water challenging me, daring me.

The hynotic, quick, unceasing whish-whish-whish of the water's rush, seemed to tempt me to defy that great illimitable bulk and motion, its imponderable power.

So, too, peril lurks at the brink of the American Falls. White-knuckled from clenching the guard rail, my eyes are drawn inexorably to watch the water dropping away and disappearing but always replaced and again dropping away. You feel it grab your breath, as it calls, calls. There lies danger. Jerk your gaze away. Retreat about fifty feet to a point where you no longer see its moving, magnetic mass, where you can only hear the siren call, still tempting. Shut down your hearing-aid!

There is a cool, dark bar nearby where three extremely dry Martini's with twists will screw your head on tight.

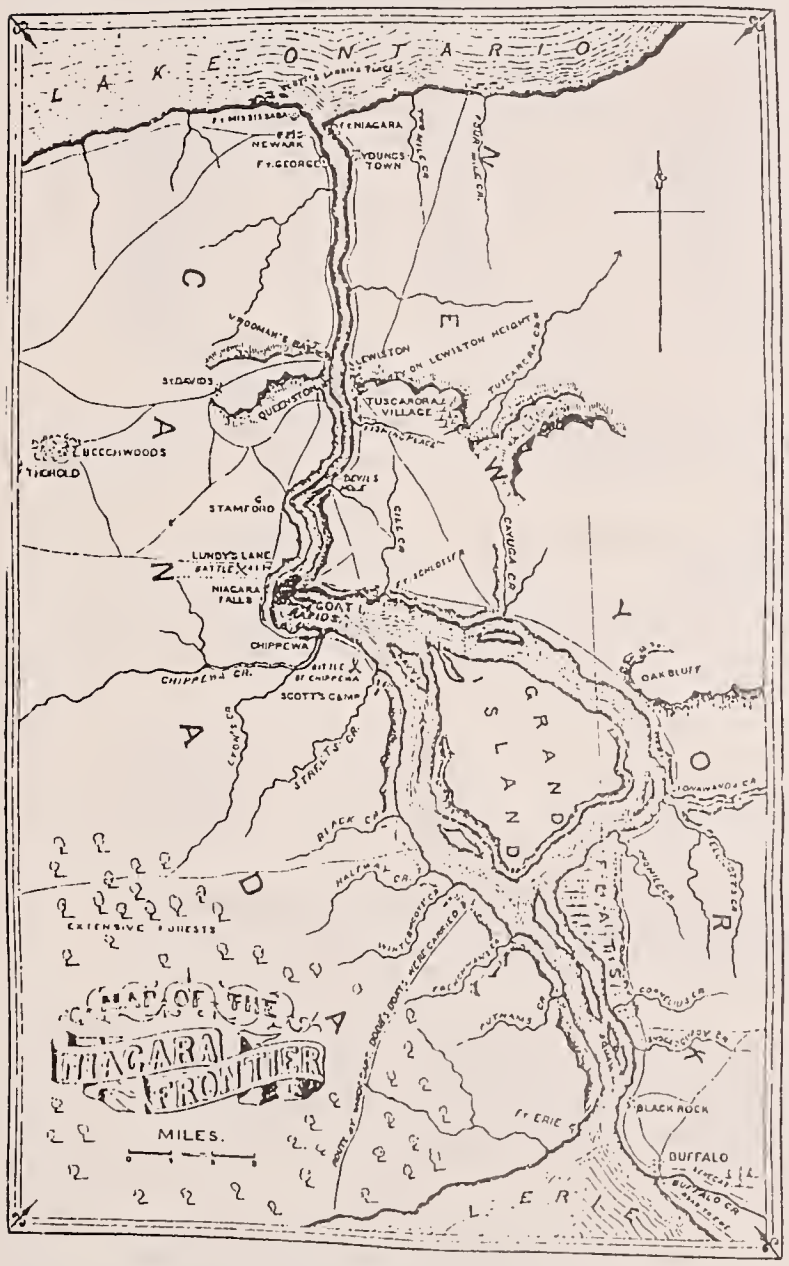
The following is a picture of a ferryboat landing at the foot of the falls from a Bartlett print of 1838.

A hundred or more years after this was drawn, I have stood on the very same spot, brought there by elevator from about 180' above. No flimsy wooden stairway for me. I don't remember seeing rowboats but the "Queen of the Mist" docked nearby. I never trusted water transportation at this point.

The Battle Of Queenston

Opposing Forces

Reports conflict regarding the size, make-up and abilities of the military forces involved in the Niagara River area in 1812.



Significant portions of the opposing armies were militia units. Canadian and American citizen soldiers, alike, were poorly led, fed, armed, clothed and quartered. Training was negligible, at best, discipline was absent. The rank and file had little trust in and sometimes open contempt for the military abilities of their officers, even those they themselves may have elected.

Many were ill; there were few surgeons or medical people to help them; medical supplies were meager, if any. You can imagine that the sanitary facilities were so primitive as inevitably to end in spreading whatever ailments there were. Dysentery was common, as was rock hard constipation. Every good officer recognizes that the efficient soldier is a man with a full stomach, an empty bowel and a tight sphincter.

Many a militiaman placed his own well-being and safety and that of his family above the welfare of his comrades-in-arms, the army or even his country. He would fight like a cornered wild cat to protect his own front stoop; the value of every thing else declined as the distance from home increased. One striking difference - the Canadians weren't asked to leave Canada - the Americans were asked to leave America and this provided an excuse.

The British regulars were from the veteran 49th Regiment of Foot, well-armed, experienced, confident, well-officered, disciplined troops. A couple of companies of Royal Arillery were also in the area.

The American regulars were detachments of the 6th, 13th and 23rd regiments and included several hundred enlisted recruits scarcely beyond the hay-foot-straw-foot status. Winfield Scott had some of the 2nd U.S. Artillery, men and guns, numbers not known, but a small detachment.

The British forces numbered 2200 men, of whom 200 were Indians. 1000 regulars and 1000 militia. They were scattered all along the frontier from Newark to Fort Erie, but the British authorities displayed skill in concentrating numbers where they were needed and in moving components swiftly from place to place. Two companies of the 49th and some militia were stationed at Queenston. The largest concentration was at Fort George.

Inadequate and flawed intelligence work led the American leaders to think that about 8000 British effectives were available on the Niagara frontier.

The Battle Of Queenston

Opposing Forces, continued

My best guess is that the American forces numbered about 6300 men, strung out at half-a-dozen or more posts along the river. Probably 10% to 15% of the total were unfit for duty at any given time. About half of the effectives were regulars, the remainder militia. They were distributed thus:

	Regulars	Militia	All Forces
Total	3,150	3,150	6,300
At Buffalo, under Brig. Gen. Smyth	1,650		1,650
Balance	1,500	3,150	4,650
At Intermediate posts	500	300	800
Troops at Lewiston	(a) 1,000	(b) 2,850	3,850

a) 600 regulars made up of detachments of the 6th, 13th and 23rd regiments.
325 23rd regiment recruits from Ft. Niagara under Lt. Col. John Chrystie.
2nd Artillery company under Lt. Col. Winfield Scott.

b) 450 Geneseo militia under Brig. Gen. William Wadsworth.
2400 other militia, mostly from New York state.

Warning - Don't Trust Historians

You are familiar with that admonition. I've used it often. Here are more reasons for it.

To quote Niagara - The Eternal Circus by Gordon Donaldson - "Just before dawn on October 13th .... the calm waters echoed from the boom and crump of artillery as the guns of Fort Niagara hurled their missiles at the village of Queenston."

This is patently ridiculous. The noise and tumult of the churning, racing waters was used to muffle the sound of boats bringing 200 men across the river. There were and are not any "calm river waters" in the entire 35 miles of the river's course.

The Americans had about 200 men across the river before the British at Queenston detected them above the river's noise and opened fire with muskets and cannon, aimed at the men and the boats. Their presence was not announced by cannon fired from a point 8-10 miles away at the mouth of the river. The American cannon at Lewiston returned the British fire. And nobody had a gun capable of throwing a cannon ball all the way from Fort Niagara. This story is crapola!

Another "authority" states that Isaac Brock was at Ft. George, seven miles upriver from Queenston. No sir, he was not. Queenston is seven miles upriver from Fort George. "Up" in this case refers to the direction in which the current flows. The Niagara flows north from Fort Erie downstream past Queenston and then Fort George and finally into Lake Ontario. Look at any of the maps provided. This guy confused north with "up"; it's north with "down."

To quote from The War of 1812 by John K. Mahon - "under cover of intense darkness, with noise blotted out by the roaring of the falls, 4000 troops assembled across from Queenston." Bunk! Queenston is 6 or 7 miles below the Falls. Its noise, there, would be distant murmuring. What the men heard was the voice of the river itself as the tremendous mass of water spouted from the gorge.

The Battle Of Queenston

Contradictions

These contradictory statements are from various books, of the normal public library ilk, with respectable credentials. Since I have no wish to make any geographic surveys personally, I present them for your evaluation and choice.

At Lewiston the river could be crossed in ten minutes and a musket ball fired from one village to the other still had the power to kill. (Muskets must have improved a lot since the Revolution when a musket ball fired with a normal powder load would fall to the ground at 100 yards. At this time, however, there were some long rifles around, with greater ranges. They could do it, quite easily, but the muskets - no.)

An experienced boatman could cross the river in 15 minutes.

The main difficulty with crossing at Queenston was that, although the river was only some 250 yards wide, the current was swift.

The river there was 200 yards wide and the current four miles an hour.

The crossing was to be made from the old ferry landing directly opposite the heights of Queenson, where the river is a tumult of eddies and whirlpools.

The current was swift.

The heights at Queenston were 345 feet above the river bank.

The heights at Queenston were 275 feet above the river level.

Van Rensselaer's Campaign Plan

The American commander, in early October, 1812, was forced to take action for which he was inadequately prepared by a series of circumstances over which he had no control. His superiors, and even President Madison, indirectly, pressured him to do something, but they didn't tell him what nor where. The taste of General William Hull's humiliating surrender at Detroit was still bitter in American mouths. A major mouthwash of good news was needed.

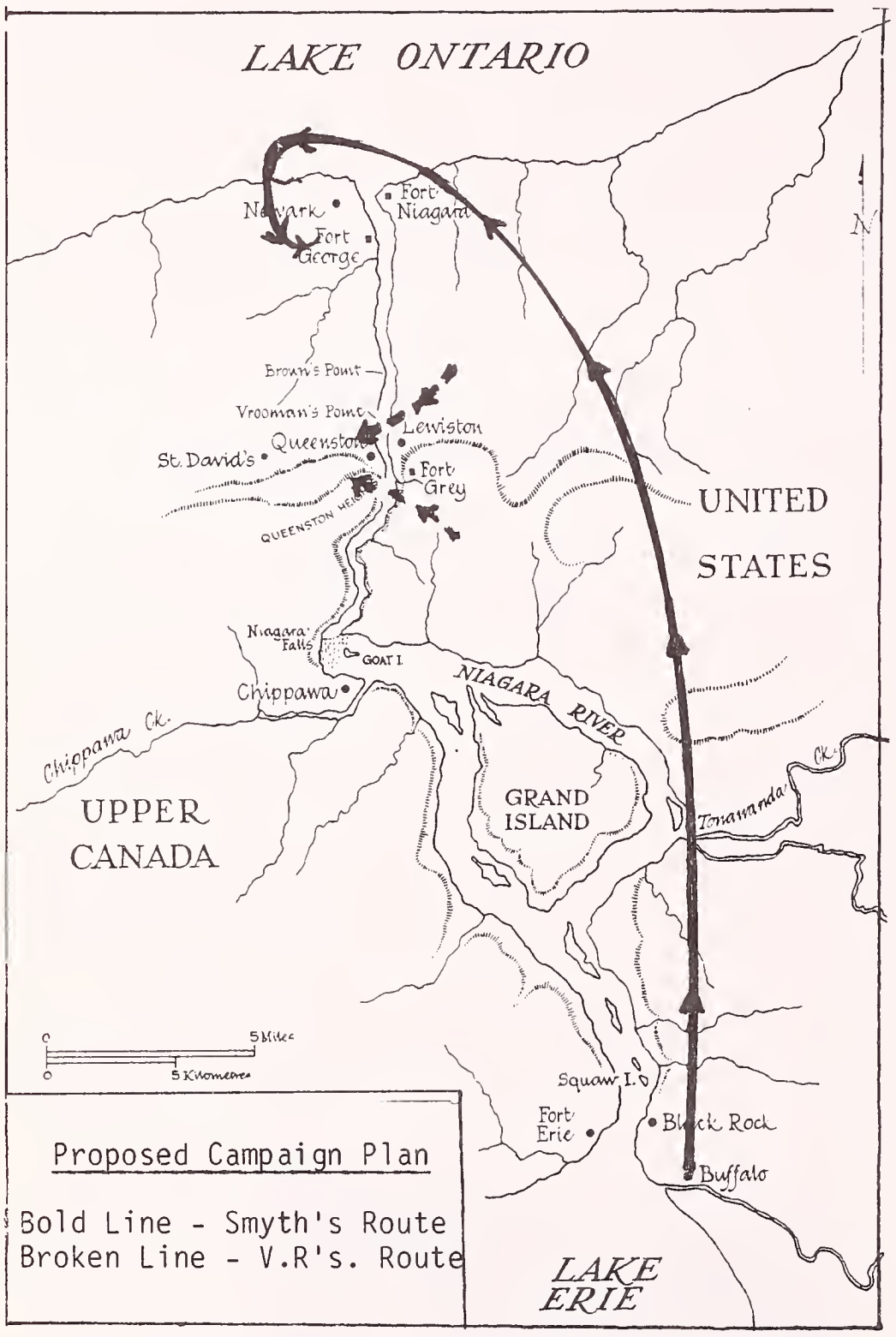
Authorities turned deaf ears on Van Rensselaer's pleas for supplies, ammunition, weapons and time to train his hayseed army. His political enemies always poised a threat of accusing him of cowardice or treachery or both.

The militia, about half of Van Rensselaer's force, was clamoring for action, talking big, insisting they attack or they would go home. Many went home anyway, some deserted to the enemy, many were too sick to fight.

Surrender of Detroit
to Sir Isaac Brock,
1812

The Battle of Queenston

Van Rensselaer's Campaign Plan, continued



With help from Solomon, Stephen Van R. devised a two-pronged plan of assault. Brigadier General Alexander Smyth was to march his men from Buffalo to Lake Ontario, where he would obtain boats, board them, row west and disembark on the lake shore just west of the river mouth, then march inland to take Fort George in the rear. This must have been based on information that the Fort's guns were permanently mounted and trained riverward. The last half of this endeavor would be within eyesight and earshot of the enemy. The remaining American forces, under Van R. would cross the river at Lewiston to capture Queenston Village and Heights.

Apocalypse Smyth, typically, would have no part of this scheme, preferring to do his fighting above the Falls, near his headquarters and its comforts. And, since Van R. did not confront him, he remained in Buffalo, inactive and insubordinate, on his fat ass. Plans for the attack on Fort George were abandoned. Van R., however, determined to proceed with the other assault. And so he did - to his sorrow.

This map displays the planned movements. It is obvious that Smyth's end of the stick is the dirty one. You can't blame him, even if he was a lousy soldier. You can't blame him for saying, "Include me out."

Boats and Boatmen - Stories That Defy Belief

Major General Van Rensselaer was certainly aware that he needed boats to carry his men and supplies across the river. Naval personnel at Black Rock could have provided a few men for each boat. There is no evidence that Van R. or anyone of his staff made inquiries about this. These fellows probably thought any jerk could row or steer a boat. Who knows? They did hire a few civilians for this purpose but they washed out when they saw the task ahead of them. After the British started firing on the boats, the civilians left it to the military, who made a mess of it.

Plans were made for 2 large boats holding 80 men each and 12 smaller ones to carry 25 men each. It was expected that boats would continue crossing until all of the troops were transported. Another source says that 30 boats were ordered, size not stated.

The Battle Of Queenston

Boats and Boatmen - Stories That Defy Belief, continued

We read of only 15 in action with an indication that more were available upstream with no one to bring them down to the point of need. The illustrations we have shown, made long after the fact, show 20-25-30 in a single boat, some of these dangerously overloaded, low in the water, gunwales awash. Another story, however, mentions three boats with 200 men. This would have to include at least two bigger boats. Another puzzle, unsolved.

Certainly beach masters were needed on both banks for orderly embarking and landing. None was provided, the men in charge blissfully unaware of the need. How were the men loaded? Were the first ten men in line assigned to the oars and the eleventh to the helm or rudder? Each of them was probably a good plow jockey but totally ignorant of boatmanship, each at home in a muddy field but experiencing an uneasy sphincter as he got a close look at the rapid, angry water and remembered he couldn't swim a lick. Once beached on the enemy shore everyone clambered out and ran for cover. The chances are that no one was assigned as boat tender and, unsecured, it drifted off the gravelly shore and collided with a loaded boat just approaching, threatening to swamp it, then, pushed off angrily by the other boat's occupants, it drifted down river with the current, empty and useless. Boats successful in coming back to the American side were abandoned by people who left for parts unknown, to hell with the boat, which drifted away and was lost. Some boats, after an initial crossing, were rowed down stream and away, away.

No allowances were made for ferrying ammunition, entrenching tools or small field pieces.

A crossing was scheduled for the early morning of October 11, 1812, but no boats were there. No one knew what happened to them or who was responsible for them.

On the morning of the 12th, 13 rowboats were assembled in a sleety rainstorm. It was obvious that many trips would be necessary to get the job done. A Lt. Sims was entrusted with the direction of the ferrying operation. He stepped into the first boat and pushed off. It was then discovered that this boat was carrying the oars for all the other boats. Sims' boat drifted far down stream and beached on the Canadian shore. Sims jumped out and disappeared, without a word to the men in the boat. They finally brought the boat back to Lewiston. It was then too late to begin again. There is no record of a search for Sims, nor of his capture. We don't know if he was motivated by stupidity, cowardice or treason or if he was just whacko. No one ever heard of him again - and he became a legend. Why in the name of all that's holy did he ever get the job and why were all the oars in one boat? Who in hell made these arrangements?

Once the <u>real</u> operation <u>really</u> began the next morning, <u>real</u> problems arose. These will be described as they occurred or their effect was felt, in our succeeding narrative of the actual battle, which begins anon. Curtain going up!

The Battle of Queenston

Plan of Attack

After two nights of miserable failure, plans were made for another attempt. The order was, "Get across, seize the village, gain the heights." Easily said.

Boats were to leave the old ferry landing at Lewiston and proceed directly across to the point where the Queenston Village flat began to rise to the Heights.

Things were supposed to go like this:

> Quiet! No one was to make a sound, 600 men in the boats, 3100 on shore, all silent! Wishful thinking.
>
> Lt. Colonel Solomon Van Rensselaer was to cross with 300 militiamen.
>
> Simultaneously Lt. Colonel John Chrystie would cross with his 300 regulars.
>
> In succeeding trips 550 regulars would follow with some small ordnance and then the rest would be transported as needed.

A Private's Private Thoughts

Imagine the thoughts of a young farmer-militiaman, a private from Geneseo, three months married, standing on the river bank the first night, sleepy, tired, a little scared and quite angry, who didn't even get to put his foot in a boat. In the morning, he was willing to laugh and mildly curse the ineptitude of officers who couldn't arrange a meeting of men and boats. Perhaps he was a little relieved too.

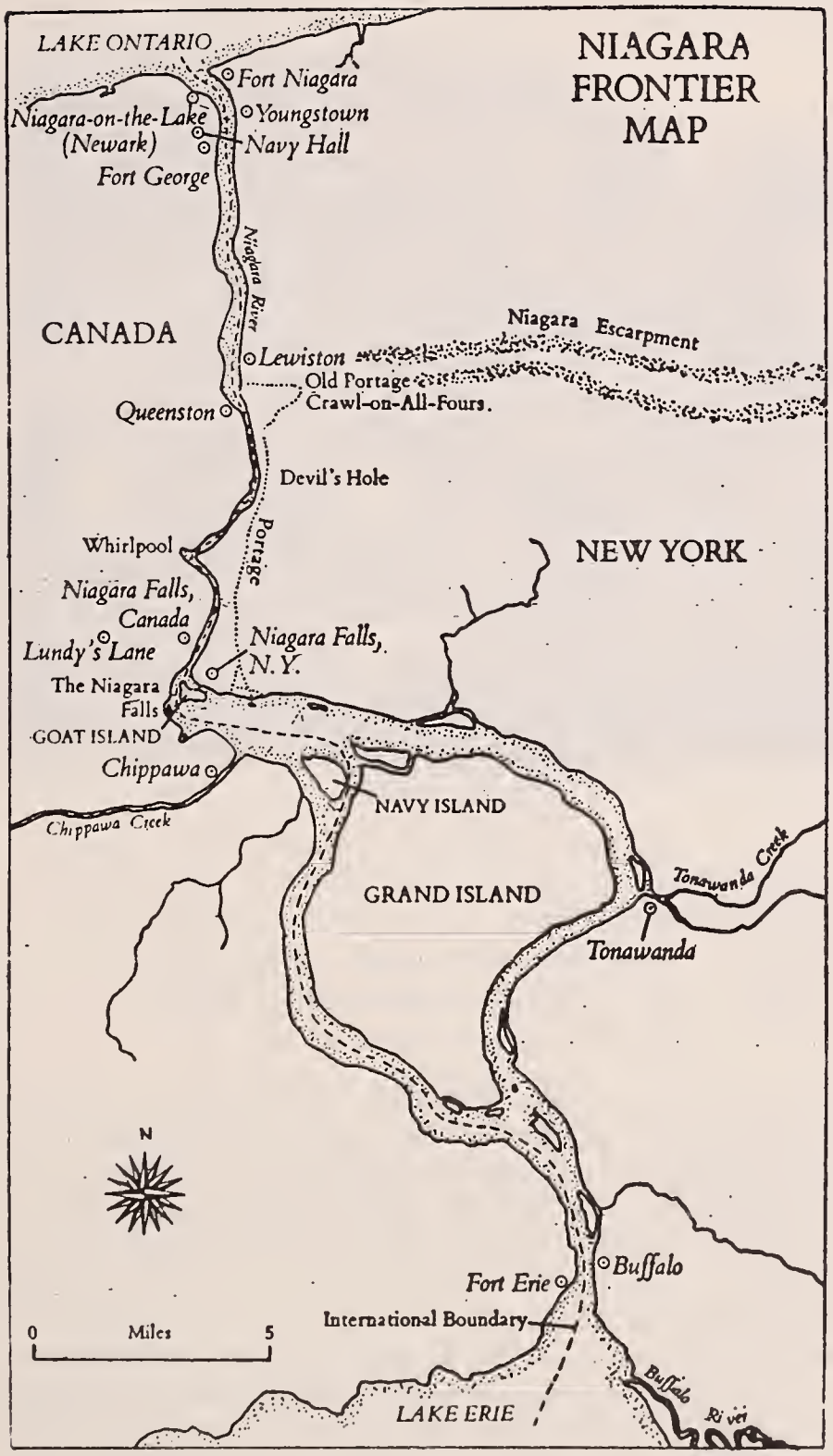
On the second night, there he was again, in the dense darkness, ready to board, thinking of a soft bed and a soft body, as Sims' boat with all the oars floated off and disappeared in the downstream murk. He was probably dismayed, disgusted and contemptuous of his inferior superiors.

Again, in the deep darkness of the third night, hunched in a cold, persistent drizzle, his coat already soaked, his hat's brim funneling an icy trickle down his neck, his thighs chafed from knee to crotch, his feet and hands numb with cold, worrying about his powder, sniffling with the beginnings of a head cold, wondering if he smelled as bad as the man next to him. Then he might think, "If these damned idiots don't get it right this time, they can take this job and shove it!?"

(Don't let on, don't tell him, but the first three boats with about 200 men were already out on the roily river in the wet darkness, lost, blind and impotent, drifting helplessly at the mercy of the current. Out of action downstream. Young Geneseo feels bad enough already.)

The Battle Of Queenston

The Attack Begins



This map is esential to an understanding of the geography of the Battle of Queenston. It covers the entire sweep of the Niagara River and all of the territory involved in the battle, one way or another.

In the dark hours of the night of October 12, 1812 and the early morning of the 13th, 4000 men assembled at Lewiston to invade Canada. Initially 1150 were to be carried across as quickly as possible in repeated round trips of 13 boats. The remaining men formed a ready reserve, to be used as necessary.

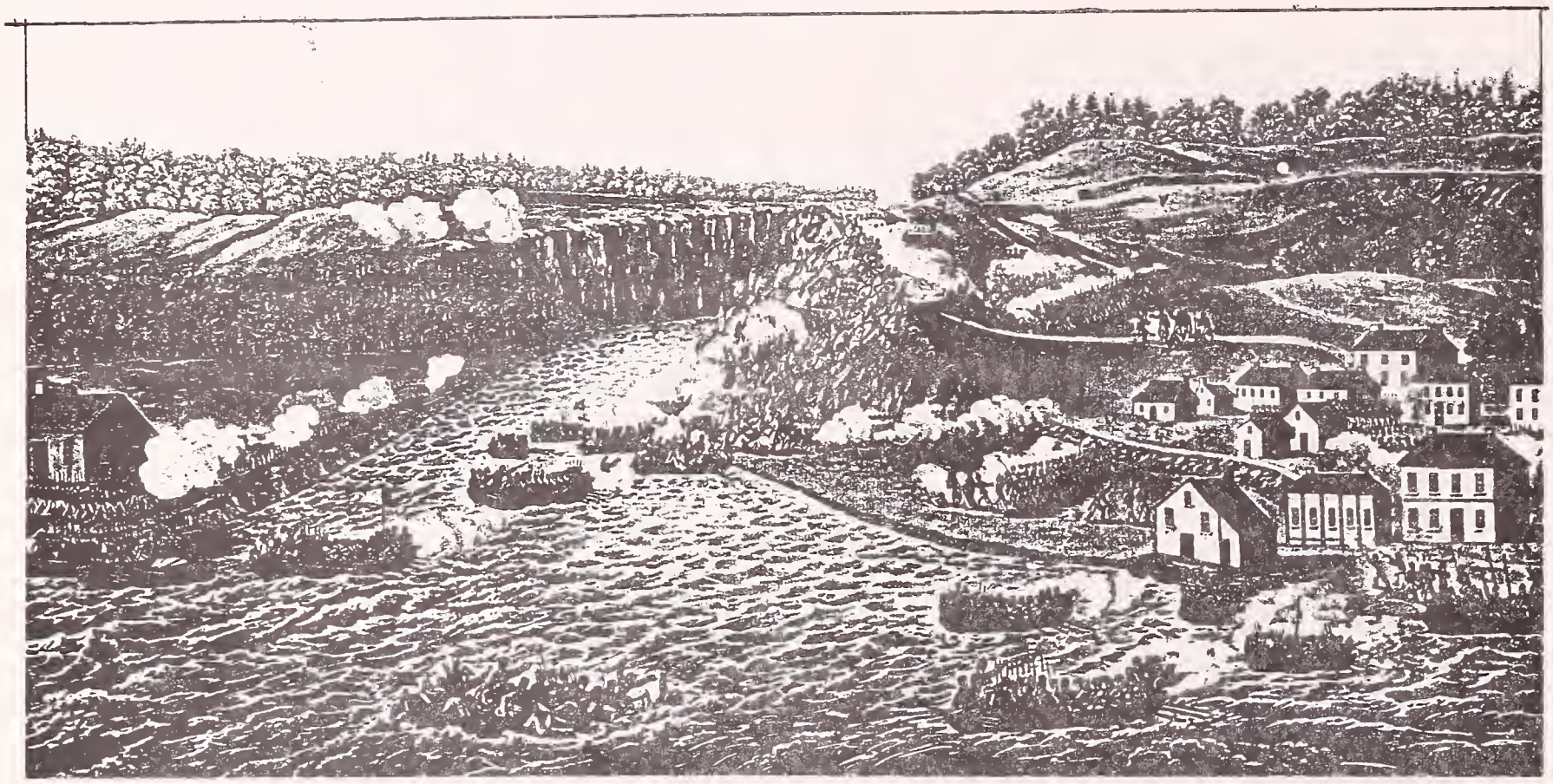
Lt. Colonel John Chrystie of the regulars was to command his detachment but not to interfere with the authority of Lt. Colonel Solomon Van Rensselaer. Lt. Colonel Winfield Scott, having stationed the guns of the 2nd Artillery on the Lewiston Bluffs, would eventally cross as a volunteer. All of this ado about military precedence was academic. Within half-an-hour, two of the three would be out of action and the third would still be on American soil.

Chrystie's men were in the early boats. The first three of these, immediately after casting off, were floundering and adrift, steering askew or absent, oar blades flailing in disarray, catching crabs, disappearing downstream in the murk. 200 men of the invading force were out of action before it started. It was 14 hours later that Chrystie first landed on the other side of the river. An ominous beginning.

The remaining ten boats, loaded with regulars and militia, made the crossing in about 15 minutes. They came under intensive musket and cannon fire just as they landed. Solomon Van Rensselaer was wounded six times before he was ten feet from his boat. Command of the force fell upon Capt. John E. Wool of the regulars, who had been wounded in both buttocks. It is uncertain whether the British were well aware of what was going on and were lying in wait, sand-bagging. How else, in the dark, could they have known the exact time to open fire and to spot the targets? My guess is that they had organized an effective, warm welcome.

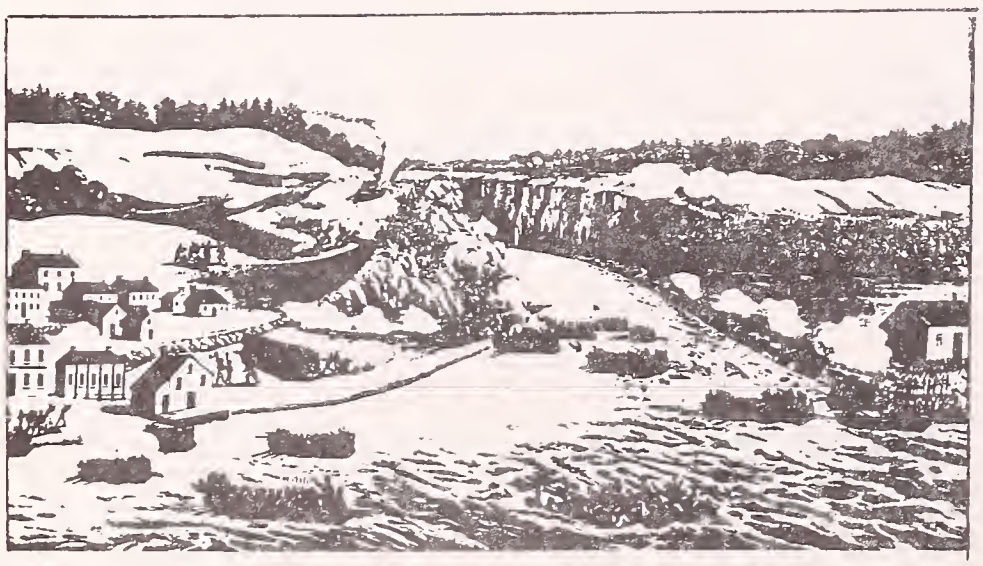
The Battle of Queenston

The Attack Begins, continued



Here is an artist's impression of the crossing. The details are inaccurate but it gives a good idea of the scene. Of course the river is much wider than it looks here. The initial crossings took place in darkness, but what could the artist do but place it in the daytime? There are 16 boats visible, all of the same size. In the foreground one boat is about to founder, well awash, some occupants already overboard. Three boats display flags which is pure poetic license.

All boats are overcrowded. In the background, at least one man has fallen overboard. There are no boats returning, although a few empties appear at the ferry landing. The marching men are so perfectly uniformed and aligned as to seem artificial. I doubt that anyone was interested in parade-ground show-off, this isn't Buckingham Palace. Everything is disproportionately large in relation to the width of the river and the height of the bluffs.



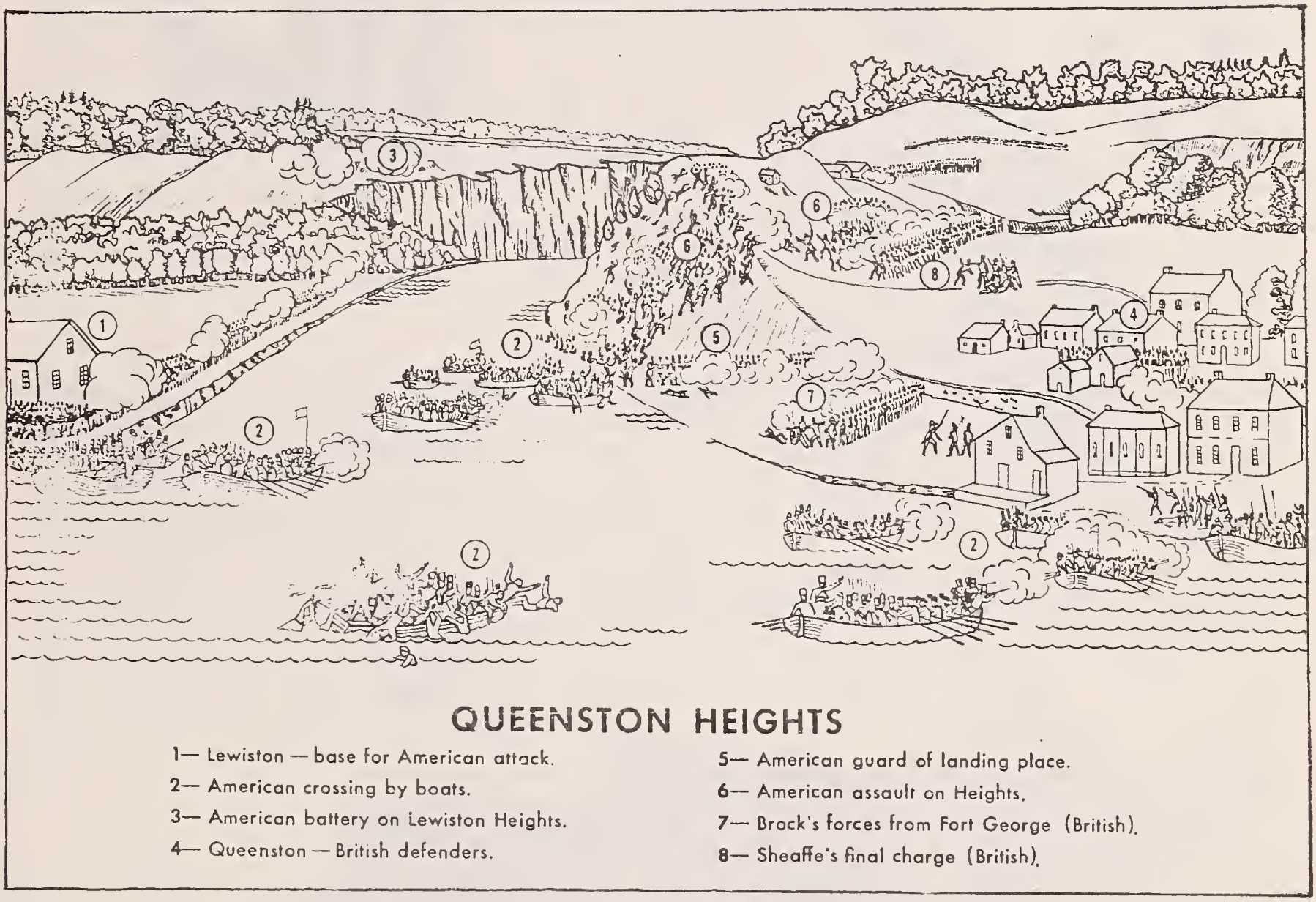
American soldiers crossing the Niagara River to invade Canada. They were soon driven back.

This is a bassackward development of the same picture, showing the invasion moving from west to east. I'm showing this only to demonstrate once again, the carelessness of historians. I have retained the original caption to show that he was referring to the same battle as we are.

The Battle Of Queenston

The Attack Begins, continued

Someone has taken the picture of the river-crossing and fighting as shown on the previous page and keyed portions of it to explanations of the activities delineated.



QUEENSTON HEIGHTS

1— Lewiston — base for American attack.
2— American crossing by boats.
3— American battery on Lewiston Heights.
4— Queenston — British defenders.
5— American guard of landing place.
6— American assault on Heights.
7— Brock's forces from Fort George (British).
8— Sheaffe's final charge (British).

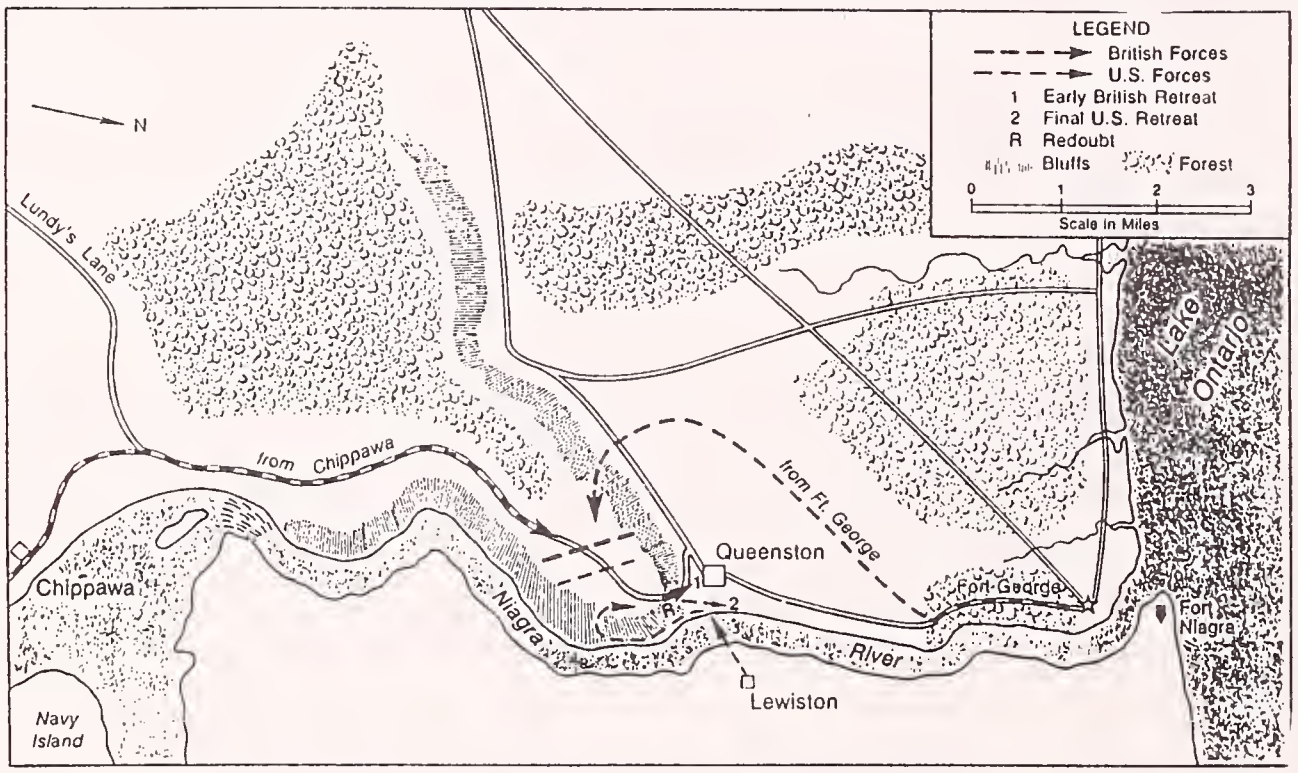
The artist has shown his conception of several actions as if they were occurring simultaneously, while in fact they took place at different times during the period from very early morning to late afternoon of October 13, 1812. Peoples' mental pictures of actions narrated in speech or prose are likely to be quite different. I think this interpretation is interesting, reasonable and novel. The artist's attempt to bring the whole sequence into a single presentation comes off quite well. This was long before the day of movies or television; all of this could be done by media today, with no particular concern for fact or truth.

The Battle Of Queenston

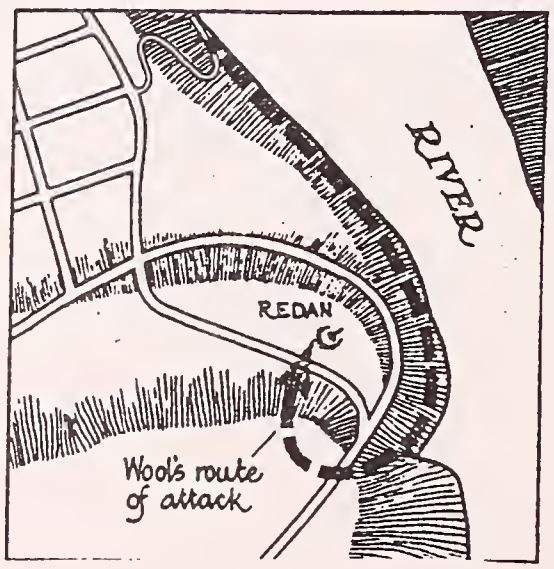
Developing The Beachhead

Scott's artillery, above Lewiston, commanded by John Lovett, began firing at the musket and cannon flashes with enough accuracy to force the British to retreat toward the Heights, pursued by Wool's men. On the flat under the Heights the Americans stopped to regroup and get their breath. Wool sent a runner to Solomon Van R. on the beach asking for orders. Back came an order to attack, which was almost immediately rescinded. Real decisiveness here. As Wool was trying to make some sense out of this, the British counter-attacked, charging down the hill. The Americans beat them off, but under heavy enemy fire they were forced to withdraw to the shelter of the cliffs, but still retaining their fragile beachhead.

Acting on the advice of a Canadian riverman-deserter, Captain Wool, sore ass not withstanding, led his men upstream along the narrow river bank to find a little-used, unguarded trail leading up to the Heights. Over 240 men [60] men made the ascent. At dawn, with a fishhook maneuver at the top, the Americans approached from the rear the Redan from which the enemy had been lobbing 18 lb cannon balls on the boats in the river and the troops on shore. The map below shows a layout of the area. Two things about this map: it faces west rather than the traditional north; the cartographer is graphic enough but no great speller.



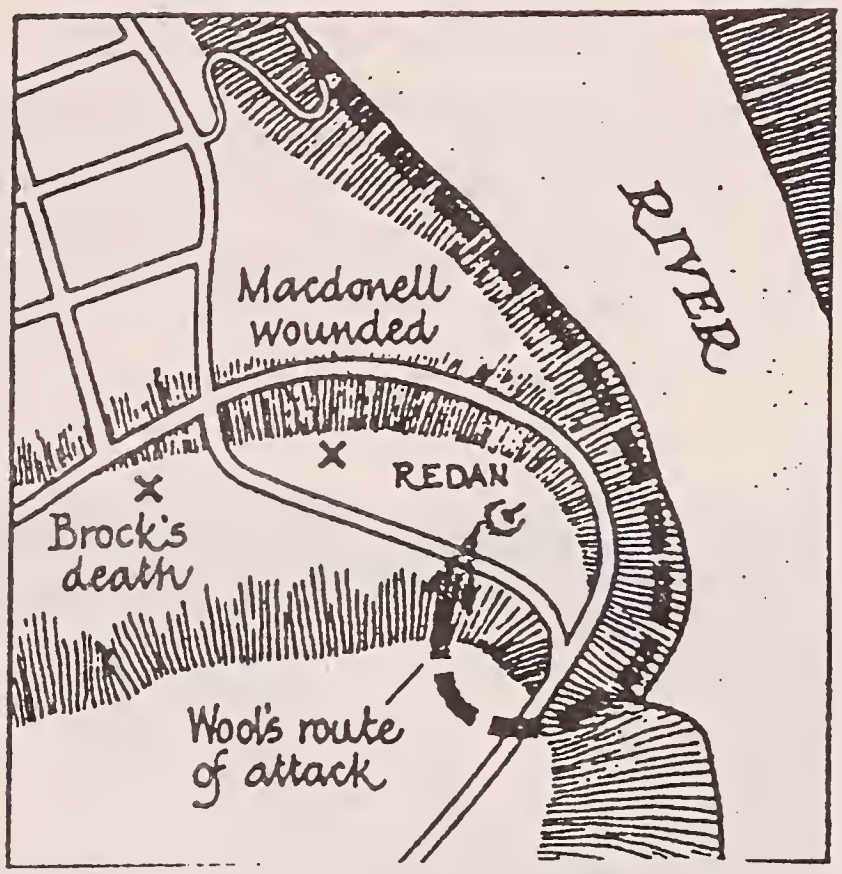
Here is a close-up view of the field of action. It illustrates Wool's path and the direction of his attack.



The Battle Of Queenston

Brock's Rendezvous With Destiny

Isaac Brock, riding hard and alone from Fort George in the mud, arrived on the scene as the sun came up and Wool's men charged the Redan. The outnumbered defenders and Brock barely had time to spike the big gun before escaping pell-mell down hill to the west. Isaac knew now that the Americans posed a serious threat and sent messengers to Major-General Roger Sheaffe at Fort George and to Captain Richard Bullock at Chippawa requesting reinforcement, pronto!



At the foot of the hill, Brock gathered about 100 men of the 49th and some York Volunteers and charged up the hill toward the Redan and the fighting Americans in their recently captured stronghold. The fire from above was so hot they were forced once more to come scurrying down the hill.

Isaac, scarcely waiting to catch his breath rallied a force of 300 and, leading them, charged once more, sword in hand, shouting. And there Brock died, charging and became a legend, the victim of a sharp-shooting Ohio rifleman. Accounts say Brock was hit in the heart [shot through the lungs] [hit in the chest]. He died instantly.

Now the grief-stricken men, angry and hot for vengeance, the British, Canadians and Indians charged once again under the leadership of Lt. Col. [Capt.] John Macdonnell.

And there, on that slope, John Macdonnell fell, mortally wounded. He was carried to Durham's Farm. about a mile north of Queenston, where British surgeons had set up a field hospital for friend and foe alike. Their care notwithstanding, Macdonnell lived only a few hours.

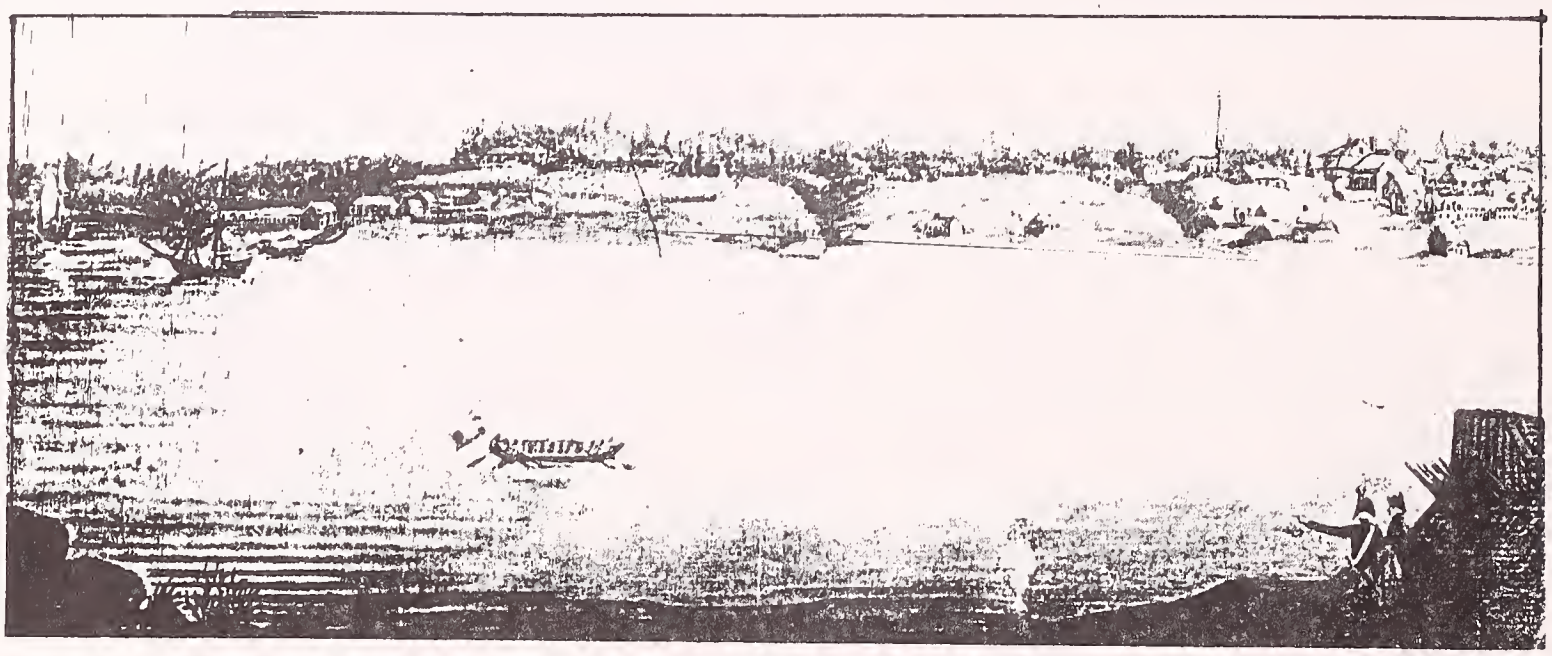
And the British charge withered and died and the bloody slope was abandoned at 7:00 AM.

And the opposing forces took a breather, licked their wounds, and got ready for more.

The Battle Of Queenston

Brock's Rendezvous With Destiny, continued

The bodies of Brock and MacDonnell were taken to Newark, where they lay in state for three days. Then their caskets were carried through a double line of regulars, militia, and Indians, 5000 men with arms reversed, while cannon solemnly boomed each minute of the mournful journey. The heroes were buried in the York Bastion of Fort George. And as the funeral procession moved to their resting place, the American guns across the river at Fort Niagara and at Lewiston, fired salutes to brave men.



This is from a watercolor painted in 1804. It shows Fort George from Fort Niagara on the opposite bank. Things were peaceful then, even friendly. Note the American soldiers waving to the boat carrying British people back to Fort George after an pleasant visit.

Change In American Command

Captain Wool in his bloody breeches and his men commanded the Heights. Brigadier General Wadsworth, Major General Stephen Van Rensselaer and Lt. Colonel Winfied Scott were rowed across in a lull, to appraise the situation. Van R. ordered that entrenchments be dug, but no tools had been brought for the job. He returned to Lewiston, taking Captain Wool with him for medical attention. As they prepared to cast off, a dozen deserting militia rabble crowded aboard, hitching a ride to safety.

Brigadier-General Wadsworth, loudly proclaiming his lack of military experience, relinquished command to Lt. Colonel Scott. At 10:00 AM on the 13th, Scott commanded 350 regulars and 250 militia. He then became aware the some of his men had skulked off immediately upon landing and were hiding out in the bushes. Others had searched for and found someone in Queenston Village who would accept their surrender, and had done just that. There were about 400 Americans unaccounted for, if anyone was counting. At this time they had occupied the Heights for five hours. A body of Indians made a number of threatening movements with lots of noise, between 1:00 and 2:00 PM which were repulsed without much todo. But the shrill war-whoops were heard across the water, tightening many a scrotum.

At 3:00 PM, the long lost Lt. Colonel Chrystie appeared, making his first appearance since his disastrous marine misadventure 14 hours earlier. His boats had grounded well below Lewiston on the American side. Unable to row upstream against the current and well aware of the Queenston cannon dominating the point of crossing, he and his men returned to Lewiston on foot. I suppose they just abandoned the boats they had demonstrated they could not handle.

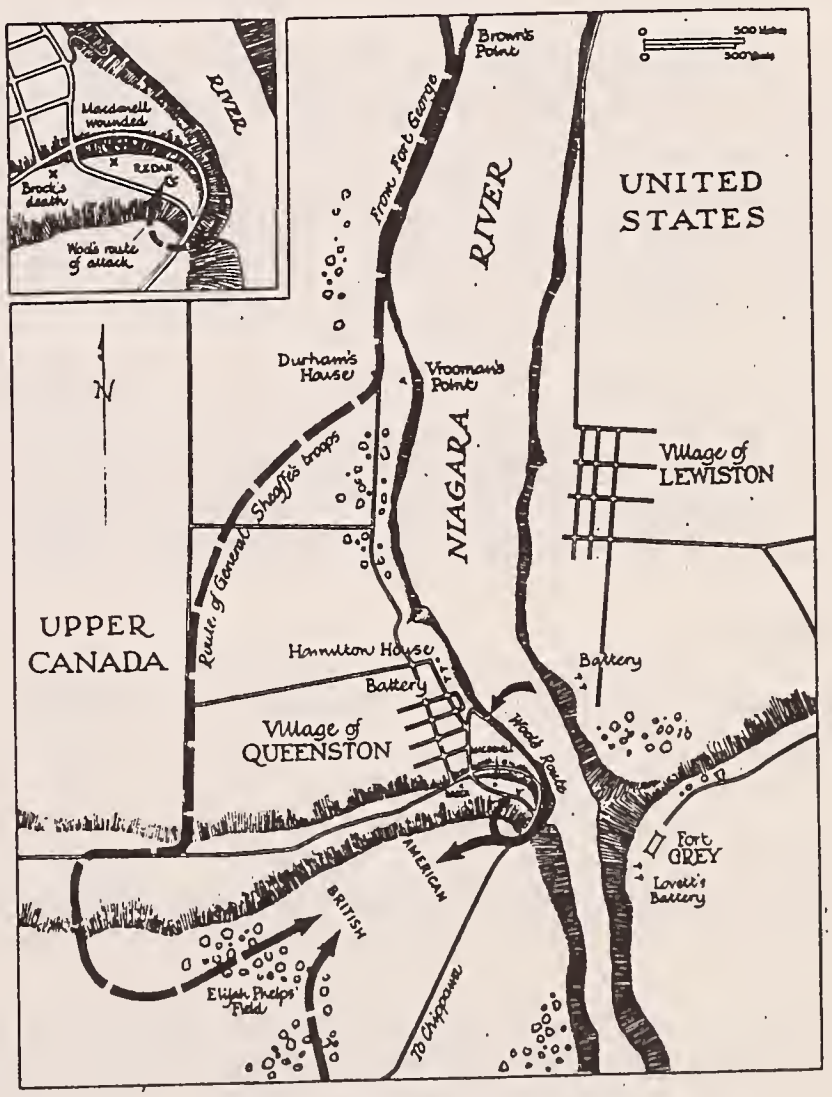
The Battle Of Queenston

Change In American Command, continued

At the ferry landing in Lewiston they found incredible confusion, lack of command or direction or cohesion, chaos. I'll bet by this time each of Chrystie's men had a pretty dim view of amphibious operations and the mental capacity of any officer higher in rank than sergeant.

The Shameful Behavior of the United States Militia

Meantime the Americans on the Heights could see the column of Major General Sheaffe's 800 men approaching along the road from Ft. George. They were not particularly concerned since they momentarily expected the heavy reinforcement that Van Rensselaer led them to expect. The scene is fairly well illustrated by this map.



The Battle of Queenston Heights

Alas, Van Rensselaer was able to provide a little ammunition, but no soldiers. They would not budge from Lewiston, quoting the provision that they were not required to fight outside the country. This was true but a large part of their reluctance or refusal to serve arose from witnessing that day the carnage the cannon created on the crossing boats and the condition and number of wounded brought back from the fighting. And those damned Indians yelling like that. Some few were willing but there were no boats or boatmen to carry them across. Van Rensselaer and his officers begged, ordered, coaxed, threatened, pleaded, promised dire punishment and public charges of cowardice - to no avail. They wanted no part of this business, they were frightened, cowering. Me first! Better them than us!

After talking big and clamoring for action, full of beans and bravado, they suddenly realized that the enemy were unfriendly and angry and had guns and bayonets and cannon balls and scalping knives and tomahawks and knew how to use them. Fear let the air out of their ego-balloons and weakened their bowels and bladders.

To paraphrase Stephen Van Rensselaer as he relayed this direful news to Scott, "I have moved among all of my troops here, and none will come to help you." Imagine the tirade of William Wadsworth when he heard this news, his face red with anger, brandishing his sword in the blue air he created.

The Battle Of Queenston

Preparation For Defense

Scott tried desperately to strengthn his position since it was obvious the column from Fort George meant to eliminate the beachhead on Canadian soil. There was a lull in the action except for some Indian demonstrations (noisy, mostly). Winfield was now aware that he had only 300 men available and ready to fight. Large bodies ot his untrained troops were giving up without a fight, quitting. Wadsworth was still scolding, cajoling, without success. The men remaining Scott stationed along the ridge, with their backs to the village, his left at the edge of the bluff, his right in a copse of trees and bushes. Everyone waited, some prayed.

Offensive Plan

Roger Sheaffe brought his column in a wide sweep from the north, out of range of the American guns on the far shore. His men climbed the escarpment on an old road and emerged on the plateau, facing east. In Elijah Phelps' plowed field they joined with the Chippawa detachment under Richard Bullock. The entire force aligned in traditional attack array. Several small cannon in Queenston Village then opened fire to demonstrate their dominance of the river, daring someone, anyone to cross, unaware that no one would.

From the height of the Redan, Scott could look out across the plateau to see Sheaffe's army poised, ready to advance. And in the other direction, toward Lewiston, he could see several hundred men sitting on their thumbs, trying to get a better view of the killing field, watching as if spectators at a sporting event. If we know Scott from history, he must have spat in disgust and scorn.

Attack!

At four o'clock in the afternoon of October 13, 1812, the British redcoats, the Cana - dian militia and their Indian allies began to move, the regulars leading, Canadians following and the Indians all a-shriek on the flank. With bayonets fixed, the British strode forward, in perfect alignment, silent, purposeful, intent on causing deadly harm, stride, stride, forward, forward. Not slow, not fast, they came grimly. The Canadians emulated the regulars as best they could and the Indians cavorted in traditional fashion, their shrill keening heard all too well by the waiting Americans.

Scott, a realist, could see the hopelessness of the situation, ordered the Americans to withdraw, hoping against hope that evacuation boats would appear. No such luck. And then the enemy was upon them, surging forward, steel thrusting, remembering Brock and MacDonnell. The American line wavered and broke, heading toward the cliffs, some trying to get to the road to Niagara Falls but cut off by whooping Indians. Retreating, the Americans tried desperately to defend themselves. Tripping in their efforts to avoid thrusting bayonets or swipes of tomahawks, some went over the edge, scrambling for holds, clinging to bushes and outcroppings but falling to their deaths on the rocks below. Others, apparently descending in safety were the victims of musket balls fired from above, or from the hurtling, screaming body of a comrade falling or pushed from the edge. A few, getting to the beach under the shoulder of the cliff waited for boats that would never come. Those who were badly wounded, unable to maintain a hold, fell into the rapid river and were swept quickly beyond help. On this fateful day, John Cowan, the ancestor of Eben D. Wiswell's two oldest children, died on this cliff, evidently in a fall from the brink.

The Battle Of Queenston

Surrender

Lt. Colonel Winfield Scott, trying to save what lives he could at the risk of his own, all 6'5" of him, brightly uniformed, ran through their fire toward the British lines, brandishing a white scarf on his sword. Eventually he was seen by British officers, to whom he surrendered his forces. The Indians did not immediately accept the surrender and continued to attack until they were forced to desist by General Sheaffe himself.

As the word of surrender spread, about 500 Americans rose from bushes and holes and other hiding places, their hands held high. When Scott saw them, he knew for sure where many of his army had gone, and was sick with shame and contempt.

An artilleryman at Lewiston, manning a gun fired across the river at Queenston, said of the reluctant militia, "The name of Indian or the sight of wounded or the Devil or something, petrified them."

The Battle Of Queenston was over. It was 4:30 PM, October 13, 1812.

Peace and Shame

Thus ended the Battle of Queenston, a senseless battle in a stupid war.

We hope that each of the 1700 Americans who had watched from the safety of the American shore, was now shame-faced, hesitant about meeting the eyes of the man next to him, wondering what his family would think, wondering what lies he could tell his grandchildren about his part in this event.

A gloomy pall of bitter regret, remorse and disgrace hung over the east bank of mighty Niagara, which went rushing, rushing, unceasing, no scars visible, the travail of puny humans beneath its notice.

Casualties

The British, Canadian and Indian forces had 14 men killed, including Isaac Brock and John Macdonnell. There were 77 wounded, including John Secord.

The Americans lost 90 killed, including John Cowan, 100 wounded and 958 [925] captured. The captured included Brigadier General William Wadsworth, Lt. Colonel Winfield Scott, Lt. Colonel John Chrystie, 4 other Lt. Colonels and 67 other officers.

The U.S. militiamen who were taken prisoner were soon paroled. The regular army prisoners were sent to various parts of Canada, where they would be held until exchanged, paroled or the war ended.

Disgrace at Detroit, ignominy at Queenston, a blank at Sackett's Harbor and a fizzle at Lake Champlain concluded the most inglorious chapter in U.S. military history. The attempt of the United States to invade Canada was a dismal failure.

The Battle Of Queenston

Family Matters

Justus Ingersoll (75 H - Chart I - 5th Generation) was an ensign in the 23rd regiment in 1812. He served on the Northern Frontier in several engagements and was in the celebrated charge on Queenston Heights. He was promoted to the rank of Captain for meritorious service, date and place not known. We know Justus survived the disaster on Queenston Heights; he may have been wounded in the early fighting and taken back to Lewiston or he may have been captured and later exchanged or paroled. Justus also fought under Winfield Scott in 1813-1814 and will appear again a little later on.

John Cowan was the great, great, great grandfather of Elaine Cowan Wiswell, the first wife of Eben D. Wiswell. They had two daughters Katherine and Elaine.

John came to this country from Scotland prior to the Revolution with his father. In 1812 he was living in Dutchess County, New York and served in the New York State militia. He was among those unfortunates at Queenston Heights who was "forced off the rocks and perished in the Niagara River on October 13, 1812." (The quote is from FGA.) It appears that John was one of Winfield Scott's men for whom the surrender came too late. John's oldest child was born in 1784. I would guess that John was 46 at the time of his death, too old to go a-soldiering. He had 8 children. He was a hell of a better soldier than his ex-comrades who sat on their thumbs and watched him die.

The Star Spangled Banner and The Maple Leaf Forever

The song presently recognized as the Canadian National Anthem is "O Canada!". In the late 19th century, a song called "The Maple Leaf Forever", written by Alexander Muir, became very popular as the maple leaf began to be displayed as a Canadian symbol of unity.

The second verse of "The Maple Leaf Forever" goes like this:

> "At Queenston Heights and Lundy's Lane,
> Our brave fathers, side by side,
> For freedom, homes and loved ones dear
> Firmly stood and nobly died.
> And those dear rights which they maintained,
> We swear to yield them never!
> Our watchword evermore shall be,
> The Maple Leaf Forever."

This song is still heard occasionally on patriotic occasions in Canada.

It was this same war, of course, that produced "The Star Spangled Banner", written by Francis Scott Key, a lawyer-poet (1779-1843), in Baltimore Harbor the night of September 13-14, 1814.

While temporarily detained on a British warship, which he had visited to arrange the release of a physician taken prisoner in Washington, Key watched the bombardment of Fort McHenry by the guns of the British fleet. He was delighted , next morning, to see the flag stil "gallantly streaming."

Sung to the tune of an English drinking song "To Anacreon In Heaven" it became instantly popular. It wasn't until 1931, however, that it was officially adopted as the

The Battle Of Queenston

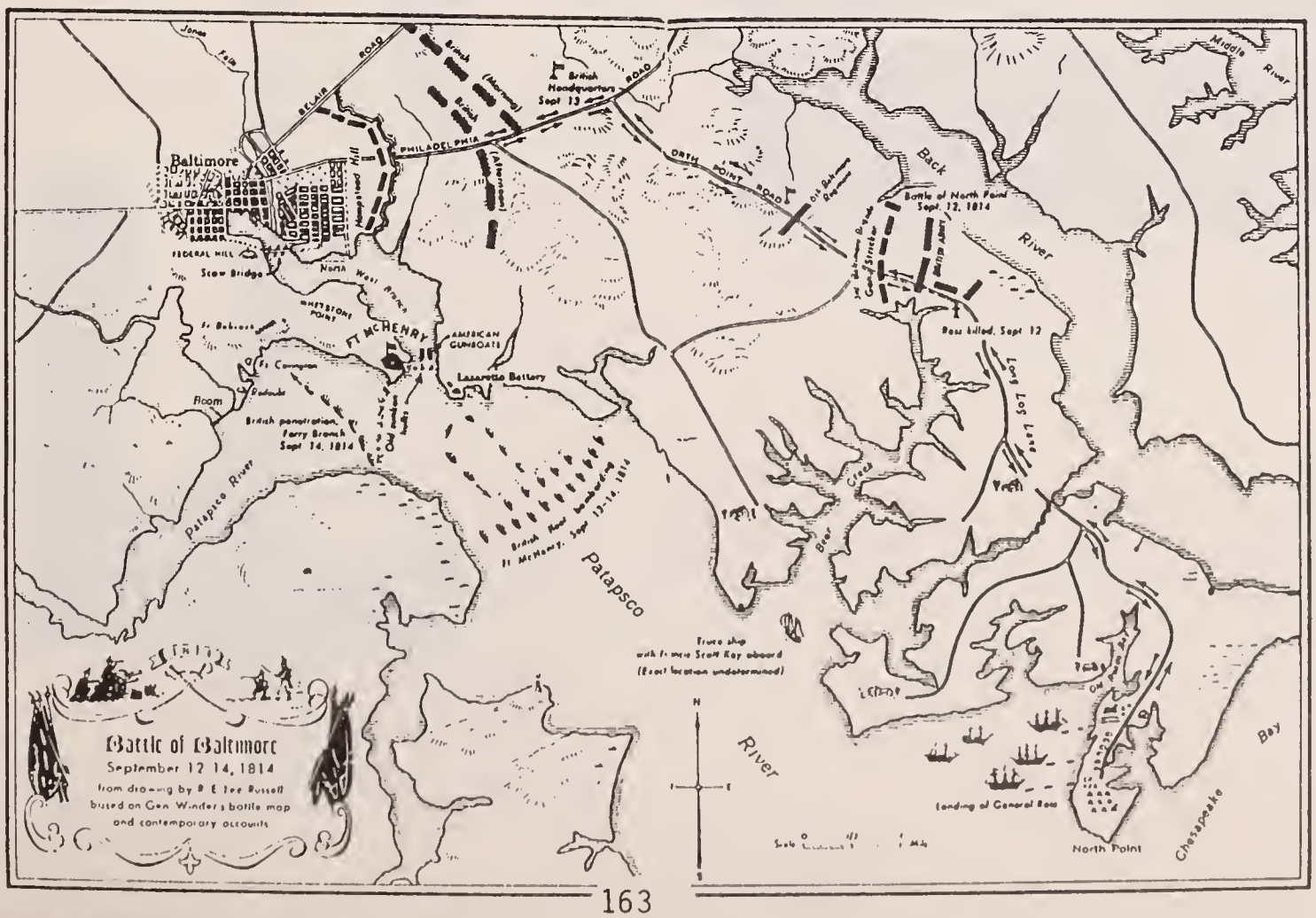
The Star-Spangled Banner and The Maple Leaf Forever, continued

United States National Anthem. To sing this song well, as it is written, a singer must have greater than normal range. Saloon and shower singers usually omit or slur over the very high or very low notes, to accomodate the song to circumstances. For that reason there have been attempts to replace it with another song (perhaps America or America The Beautiful). Some professionals, and amateurs too, sing it without a great deal of attention to the notes or the words either. We often hear personally arranged renditions, usually off-key and off-melody, written to meet a singer's meager talent. Words may be so accented in some language that only soul or scat fans can understand them. It is simply noise, shrill, loud, strident, atonal, full of teeth and grimaces.

Long may it wave! The way it was! You don't have to sing it good, but sing it the way it was meant to be.

Oddly enough, singing "O Canada!" requires a greater than normal range, too.

The picture at the right above depicts Francis Scott Key as he observes at dawn's early light the flag gallantly streaming. The picture below is one of Baltimore Harbor on that day in 1814. The position of the ship on which Key was detained in located just above the "N" in the direction pointer. The illustration above places him much nearer the action, the artist's license.



The Battle of Queenston

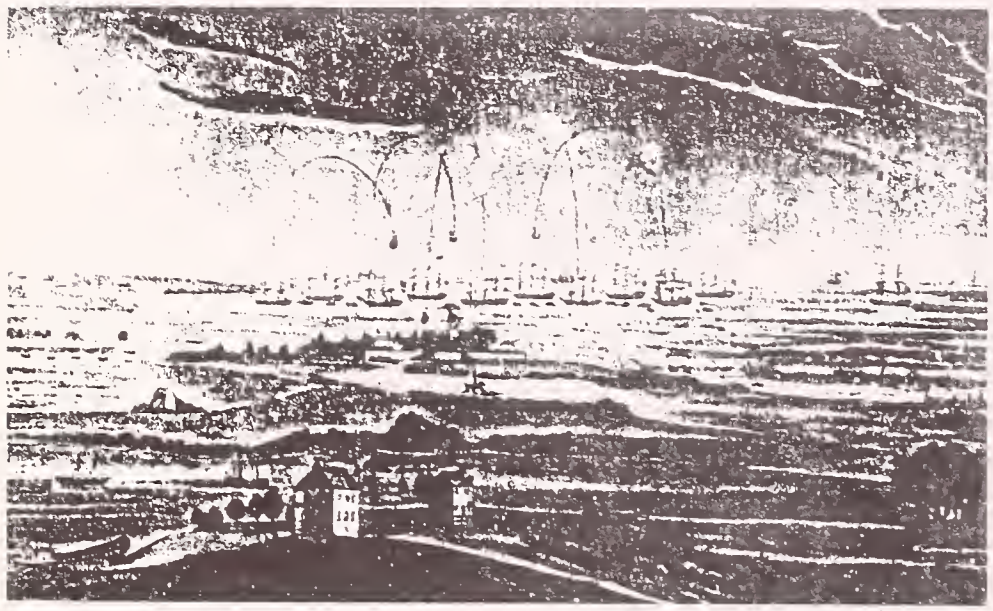
The Star Spangled Banner and The Maple Leaf Forever, continued

Francis Key was a Virginian, an attorney, 33 years old at the time. Like many Americans at that time he felt that declaring war was a mistake. The prisoner whose release he was seeking was Dr. William Beanes. Key rowed out to HMS Linden with two companions. They were received under a flag of truce. Since the fight for the Chesapeake was about to begin, the Ship's Captain insisted they remain overnight as his guests.

Key, a Federalist, had little interest in Madison's fight against Britain.

They had a fine seat for the evening's fireworks as the ships of Admiral Cockburn's fleet bombarded the fort. And the Americans in the fort replied with their 57 guns. It was noisy!

The fort's flag that Key watched for so intently was a good big one for the purpose - 42 feet by 30 feet, clearly seen in the morning when the smoke cleared. I don't know if any British ships were hit. Key and his companions rowed ashore the next day. I never did hear what happened to Dr. Beanes. Or Francis Key, for that matter.

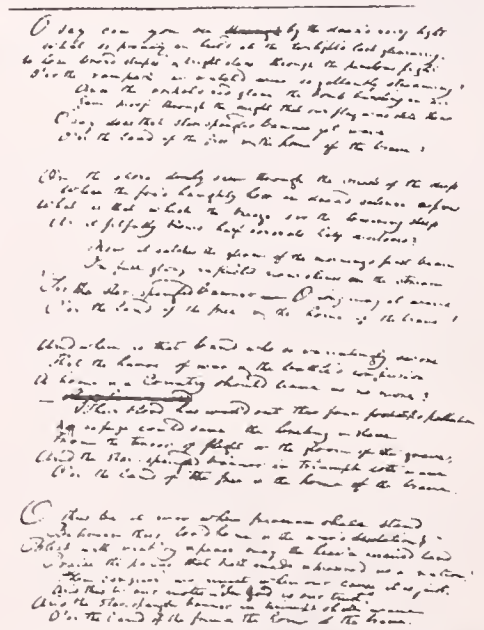


Key watched the bombing from captivity on a British ship. Finding his captors "illiberal, ignorant and vulgar," he was moved despite his dislike for the war.

I find the method used by the artist in depicting rockets and bombs interesting and informative. How would you have done this? The action here is viewed from the fort while the picture on the preceding page is viewed from the sea.

Let's all stand up and sing! Straighten up!

Does anyone know the second verse? Or the third?



Key's autograph manuscript of the poem, initially printed as a handbill.

The Battle Of Queenston

The Brock Monument

This is the monument on Queenston Heights marking the American-held position Isaac Brock was attempting to recapture when he was felled by a bullet fired by an Ohio sharpshooter on October 13, 1812. The spot at which he fell near the foot of the escarpment is marked with a small stone cenotaph.

The memorial is a large statue of Sir Isaac atop a roman column supported by a high base and pedestal, bristling with stone lions and classical symbols of war.

When the original pillar was being built and 48 feet high, Lt. Governor Sir Peregrine Maitland, who had laid the cornerstone, was advised that anti-establishment malcontents had inserted a whisky bottle and a copy of a rebel newspaper in its base. Sir Peregrine had the whole shebang dismantled to remove the offending artifacts. The memorial was reconstructed sans bottle and newspaper and was dedicated in 1825. It was 135 feet high. The bodies of Sir Isaac and John Macdonnell were taken from their orinal graves in Ft. George and reinterred in a vault beneath the monument.

One View

Another

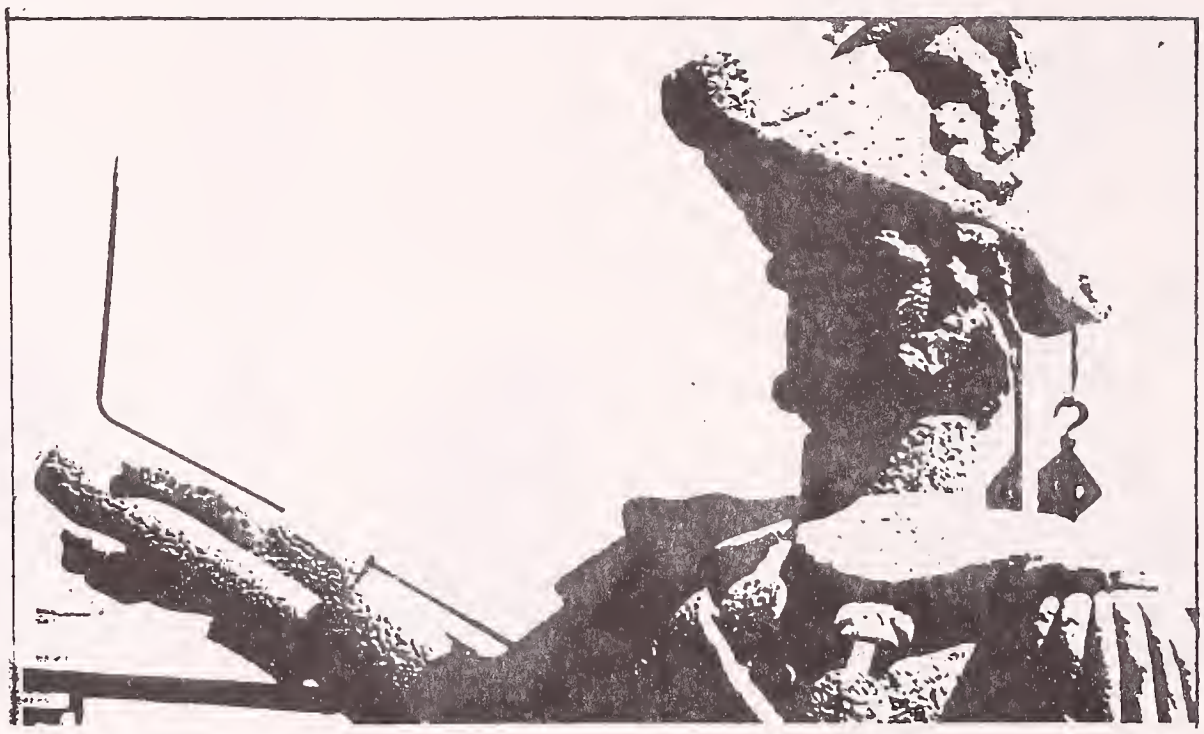
On Good Friday, 1840, Benjamin Lett, an Irish-Canadian hothead rebel, who had been hiding in the United States, crossed the river, planted gunpowder at the base of the monument and blew it up, destroying most of it. The bodies of Sir isaac and Lt. Colonel Macdonnell were moved to a cemetery in Queenston.

The monument was rebuilt in 1853 (1856), but this time its height was increased to 185 feet [210 feet]. The bodies of the two heroes were again placed in the vault beneath. There was a spiral staircase within the slim column. A patient and healthy climber was rewarded by a splendid view of the battlefield, orchards and the majestic river gorge.

On April 5, 1929, an electrical storm tore off the outstretched arm of the statue of Brock on the top of the column. Workmen found that the head and shoulders were also loose so many parts were replaced.

The Battle Of Queenston

The Brock Monument, continued

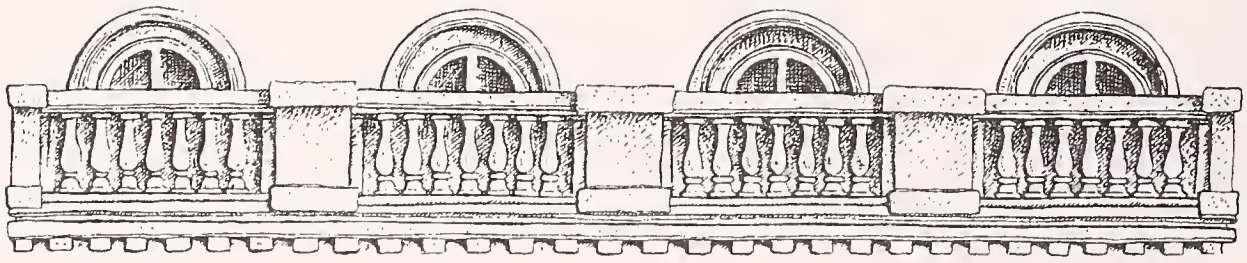


Brock, in stone or cement, now holds a lightning rod in his hand and another is sticking out of his hat. From the ground he still looks debonair and dashing.
Up close is something else.

A bronze tablet, near the monument, marks the Redan, which was the object of the gallant but futile charges led successively but unsuccessfully by Brock and Macdonnell.

The following quote sums it up nicely:

> "So Brock in death is as valuable to the ruling class as Brock in life. He will not be remembered for his real contribution to the country; his military prescience, his careful preparation for a war during the years of peace, his bloodless capture of the American stronghold (Detroit). When Canadians hear his name, as they often will over the years, the picture they will form in their minds will be that final impetuous dash, splendidly heroic and tragically foolish, on the slippery heights of Queenston on a gloomy October morning."



The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Soldiers Marching Up And Down

Continuing Hostilities On The Niagara Frontier 1812-1814

The American surrender at Queenston Heights on October 13, 1812 crippled the political and military positions of the United States on the Niagara Frontier.

Immediate, aggressive follow-up action by British Major General Roger Sheaffe would have rolled up whatever puny resistance the Americans had to offer anywhere along the river's length. Instead Sheaffe chose a defensive stance; he even agreed to a truce which could be terminated on 24 hour notice. Perhaps the British were feeling the same pinch as their opponents. Canadian militiamen were returning home to their shops or farms, complacent with their victories but unhappy with the emerging power of the Family Compact, the group of aristocrat elites who were running the show. These were the Tories, the political conservatives.

The morale of the United States public and troops, badly shaken by Hull's humiliating surrender at Detroit, was shattered anew by the disgraceful defeat at Queenston.

Subsequently, for two years, Niagara Frontier military activities varied from alternating hit-and-run raids by either side to substantial attacks on major points on both banks of the river. There was constant commotion. At war's end, after all the hullabaloo, the military ineptitude, the deaths, wounds and suffering and the destruction of property, very little had been accomplished. The British still occupied a small piece of New York State at Fort Niagara. Except for prisoners-of-war, there was nary an American soldier on the west bank.

Some of "our" people participated in or were affected by these events. I'll strive for a concise summary in a calendar arrangement. I will not dwell on a specific detail unless it has special interest or relevancy. Give thanks!

Of course the war was being waged elsewhere, on Lake Ontario, the St. Lawrence River, Chesapeake Bay, the east coast, at sea and near the mouth of the Mississippi. I will eschew discussions of the inevitably associated political stratagems and deficiences, but I'll highlight things that display stupidity, venality or greed.

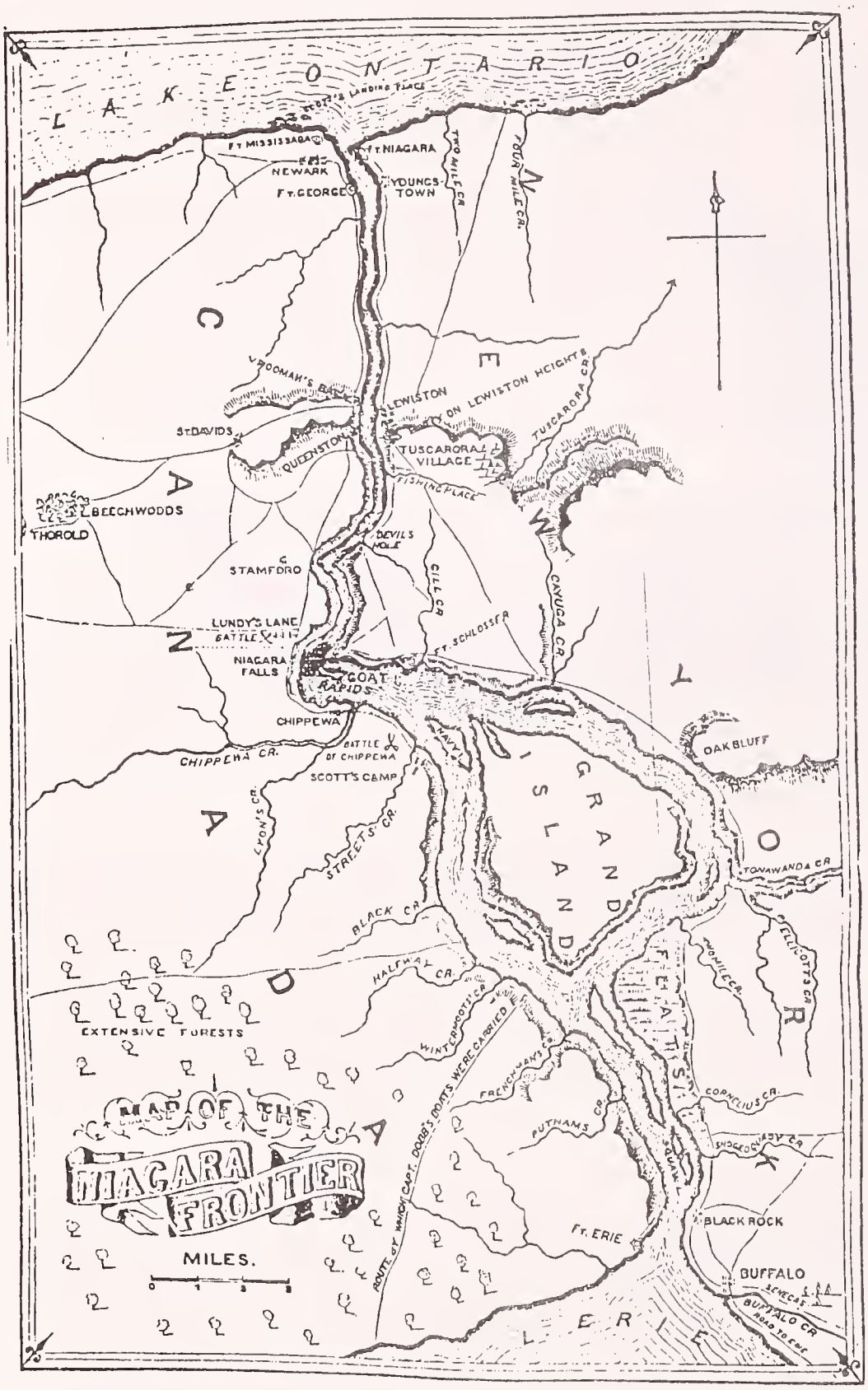
Transfer of Command - Negotiation Of The Truce

Major General Stephen Van Rensselaer resigned his command of the United States forces on the Niagara Frontier on October 14 or 15, 1812. Brigadier General Alexander Smyth succeeded him on October 16th. Sources disagree as to which American commander negotiated the truce with Sheaffe. Its initial date is elusive.

Maps

On the next page are area maps of the time. The larger is limited to the river and nearby inland points. The smaller map, drawn to a larger scale locates those places west of the river and settlements and sites along the curve of Lake Ontario. The recital you are about to read will be easier to follow if you refer to these aids. The geography of the action is often confusing.

Soldiers Marching Up And Down



November 9, 1812

Smyth announced an invasion of Canada within 15 days. Evidently (and logically) the British took this as terminating the truce. One source says Smyth terminated the truce on November 20, 1812, but there was earlier hostile action.

November 17, 1812

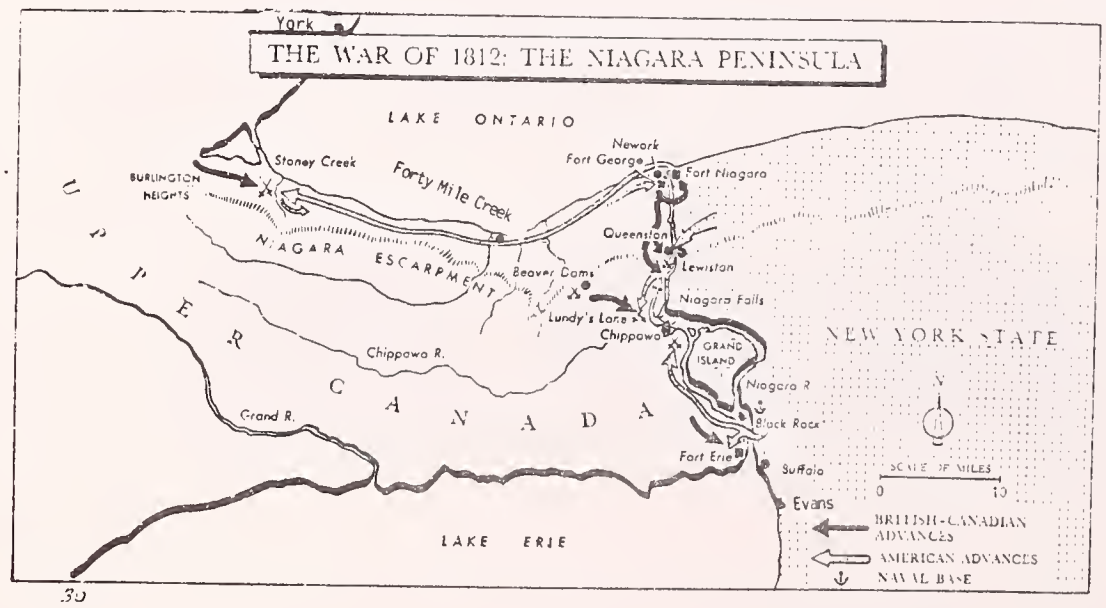
Smyth's headquarters at Black Rock was bombarded heavily by British batteries on the west bank. A magazine was exploded and buildings were destroyed. One of Smyth's early accomplishments had been an exegesis of the Book of Revalations, from which he earned the name "Apocalypse". As he prepared to cross into Canada, it was revealed to him that war is dangerous.

November 20, 1812

The guns of Ft. George opened an intensive bombardment of Fort Niagara. The Americans responded in kind. The British fired 2000 red-hot cannon balls into the American fortification. There was mutual damage and a few casualties.

November 28, 1812 - 3:00 AM

A party of 200 men of the US 14th Infantry Regiment under command of Lt. Colonel Charles Boerstler crossed the Niagara to destroy a bridge across Frenchman's Creek on the road to Chippawa. The British were well aware of their coming and resisted furiously. The Americans fought through to their target, then remembered they had left their axes in the boats. Good, crisp thinking! They withdrew, fighting, back to their landing place. Some of the boats had disappeared and a small body of men were left on the river bank for capture by the British.



Soldiers Marching Up And Down

November 28, 1812 - 3:00 AM, continued

This double boo-boo is not elaborated upon in anything I read. The Americans of 1812 seem to self-destruct at will. If you think this is bad, wait! You'll hear more about Lt. Colonel Boerstler, a born loser!

November 28, 1812 - 3:00 AM, Part II

At the same time another party of 130 men from the US 15th Infantry Regiment, under command of Captain William King, crossed the Niagara to destroy British batteries opposite Black Rock. These guns, near Red House, were the ones that had pounded Smyth's headquarters on the 17th. Here again, they were expected and the British defended fiercely. In spite of this strong resistence, the Americans stormed the batteries and spiked the guns. Then they returned to the river bank, fighting all the while. No boats! Wrong place! They were lost, and lost. The entire force surrendered. A demonstration of precise soldiering.

Explanatory Interlude

Historians disagree on the details of the events of November 28, 1812 to December 1, 1812, near Black Rock on the Niagara Frontier. Three versions are presented here, identified thus:

Version 1 - From The War of 1812 by Reginald Horsman
Version 2 - From The Invasion of Canada 1812 by Pierre Berton
Version 3 - From The War of 1812 by John K. Mahon

The Canadians spell Chippawa just like that. Modern Americans spell it Chippewa. I may spell it either way, as the keys fall.

November 28, 1812 - Dawn to Late Afternoon - Version 1

General Dearborn had ordered that no Canadian invasion was to be attempted with less than 3000 men. Alexander Smyth proposed to transport 3000 men simultaneously across the Niagara from a point south of Black Rock, in full view of observers on the far bank. Great confusion reigned at the point of embarkation. Some boats shoved off half-filled. By mid-afternoon only 1200 [2000] men were afloat, these rowing around aimlessly, fighting the current pull, some upriver a bit, enjoying the view through sleety rain, stomachs bobbing up and down with the boat, standing precariously to urinate over the side, sometimes not judging the wind correctly to the loud rage of one's shipmates. The remaining troops stood around on shore, cold, wet and hungry getting angrier by the minute. Late in the afternoon Smyth decided he didn't have enough men and ordered the men to disembark.

November 28, 1812 - Dawn to Late Afternoon - Version 2

British observers on the Canadian shore saw the Americans fumbling around trying to get their men into boats. Late in the afternoon several hundred had been sitting in the boats since early morning, while those not yet embarked tried anything and everything to keep warm. A light snow was falling and ice was floating in the river. Believe it or not, when all the men were loaded, Smyth sent a message across to British Lt. Colonel Cecil Bisshopp [Bisshop], demanding his surrender. Bisshopp

Soldiers Marching Up And Down

November 28, 1812 - Dawn to Late Afternoon - Version 2, continued

curtly refused, probably wondering what kind of an idiot he was opposing. Smyth then ordered his troops to, "Disembark and dine." And now his own men were wondering what kind of an idiot was telling them what to do.

The troops were on the point of rebellion. Muskets were broken in fury. Swords were snapped across knees. There was a blue aura over the groups of men, reflecting the color of their expressions of frustrations and rage.

November 28, 1812 - Dawn to Late Afternoon - Version 3

The American forces stood by on shore, cold and wet, waiting for the order to follow the "advance parties" (Boerstler and King). The order never came and the men returned to camp in a mutinous mood. Of the 1500 men in the newly arrived Pennsylvania Brigade, only 413 would agree to invade Canada.

November 29, 1812 - 8:00 AM and Following - Version 1

The American troops gathered once more on shore. Officers divided them into groups and sent them into the nearby woods to build fires and keep warm. While they waited, plans were changed to cross the river across from Chippawa, attack its garrison and march through Queenston to Ft. George. All action was postponed until the next day.

November 29, 1812 - 8:00 AM and Following - Versions 2 and 3

No mention is made of activity on this day.

December 1, 1812- Before Dawn - Version 1

An hour before dawn American troops stood-by on shore waiting to board the boats. Three hours later only 1500 men had embarked. Smyth cancelled the invasion. The troops were dangerously out of control, demonstrating vigorously against their commander.

December 1, 1812 - Before Dawn - Version 2

Another attempt, but the troops are to "slip quietly down the river, hoping to avoid enemy cannon and to land above Chippawa, attack its garrison and if successful march through Queenston to Ft. George."

Two hours before dawn American troops begin again to embark. At dawn they are not fully loaded. 1500 men are embarked, many of them so ill a day's march is beyond them. Meanwhile, Quartermaster General Peter B. Porter is in charge of the boats in mid-stream, trying to keep them together, ready to blow his stack. (The Pennsylvania Brigade is willing to invade Canada, but not under General Smyth.) Other troops refuse to embark. At last Smyth sent a message out to Porter, advising him that the invasion is cancelled. When the troops are disembarked they are so angry some of them fire on Smyth's tent, bullets whizzing through the canvas. Smyth's aide was nearly killed. Smyth doubles his personal guard and moves his quarters repeatedly.

(Peter B. Porter is beside himself with rage and calls Smyth a traitor. On December 12, 1812, they fight a bloodless duel on Grand Island, one shot each.)

Soldiers Marching Up And Down

December 1, 1812 - Before Dawn - Version 3

Smyth announced another attempt on December 1. 865 regulars, 506 12-month volunteers and 100 militia showed up and embarked. Alex conferred with his staff, decided he did not have enough men and cancelled the invasion.

December 15, (?), 1812

Governor Daniel D. Tompkins of New York criticized Smyth publicly for his "imbecility and folly." President Madison granted Smyth permission to return to Virginia on leave. As Smyth left camp he was hooted by a mob and muskets were discharged in his direction. He made the trip to Virginia on back roads, watchful for an ambush by his disgruntled one-time troops. In a few months he was dropped from the army rolls and disappeared into oblivion.

April 26 [27], 1813 and following

800 American troops under Brigadier General Zebulon Pike landed three miles west of York on Lake Ontario. They encountered strong resistance but advanced to the town and captured it. Government buildings and materials were destroyed. General Pike was killed when a powder magazine blew up. The Americans boarded their fleet and were transported to a point near Fort Niagara.

May 24, 1813

An American fleet bombarded Ft. George. Troops landed two miles away and attacked. The British spiked their guns, blew up the magazine and abandoned the fort, retreating about 18 miles south and west to a point near Beaver Dam (Dams). Forts Erie and Chippawa were abandoned by the British; the garrisons from these places joined the other forces at Beaver Dam. Americans occupied Newark, Ft. George, Ft. Erie and Fort Chippawa.

June 1, 1813

Americans set out to pursue the British troops who had moved to the west from Beaver Dam to Stoney Creek. The Americans established positions there.

June 5, 1813

The British stormed the American positions at Stoney Point, forcing them to retreat first to Forty-Mile Creek and two days later to Ft. George. The Americans abandoned great piles of supplies in the haste of the retreat.

This is an artist's idea of the British attack at Stoney Creek. Two American Brigadier Generals were captured.

Soldiers Marching Up And Down

June 7, 1813

The Americans evacuated Fort Erie and Fort Chippawa, but remained in possession of Fort George and Queenston.

June 23, 1813

Lt. Colonel Boerstler led a column from Fort George through Queenston to attack the British outpost at Beaver Dam. There were 570 men, 2 cannon and 2 four-horse wagons. They were ambushed by Caughnawaga Indians and a few British. After three hours of fighting, Boerstler surrendered his entire force to avoid massace by the Indians. This is sometimes called the Battle of Beechwoods. Refer to the adventures of Laura Ingersoll Secord.

July 3 or 4, 1813

A 34-man party of Indians and Canadian militia crossed the Niagara and attacked the American blockhouse at Fort Schlosser. They seized the place, stripped it of supplies and carried them back across the river.

July 11, 1813

A British force of 240 men under Lt. Colonel Cecil Bisshop [Bisshopp] crossed the river from Chippawa at 2:00 AM and landed above Black Rock. At first the raid appeared to be successful, but the raiders were contained, then repulsed in a counter-attack led by Peter W. Porter. The British retreated back across to Chippawa.

July 31, 1813

York was again attacked and occupied by the Americans. They destroyed a government warehouse, then sailed away.

December 10, 1813

American Brigadier General McClure led a raiding party from Fort George to the village of Newark and burned it to the ground, including 150 houses.

December 15, 1813

The enemy was aware that McClure's garrison at Ft. George had been reduced to about 60 men. They attacked just as McClure's men were preparing to leave and go to Fort Niagara. The British moved so rapidly that the Americans had no opportunity to spike the guns or destroy the fort. They left it stronger than when the British had surrendered it.

Ft. George, as reconstructed

December 18, 1813

500 British troops with scaling ladders and axes landed three miles above Fort Niagara. It was manned by 400 men and guarded by sentries drinking in a pub in Youngstown. The surprise was complete. 67 Americans were bayoneted before they knew what hit them. American losses were 350 prisoners, 30 [27] cannon, 3000 muskets, ammunition, shoes, blankets and other stores. The British thus established themselves east of the Niagara and remained there until the war was over.

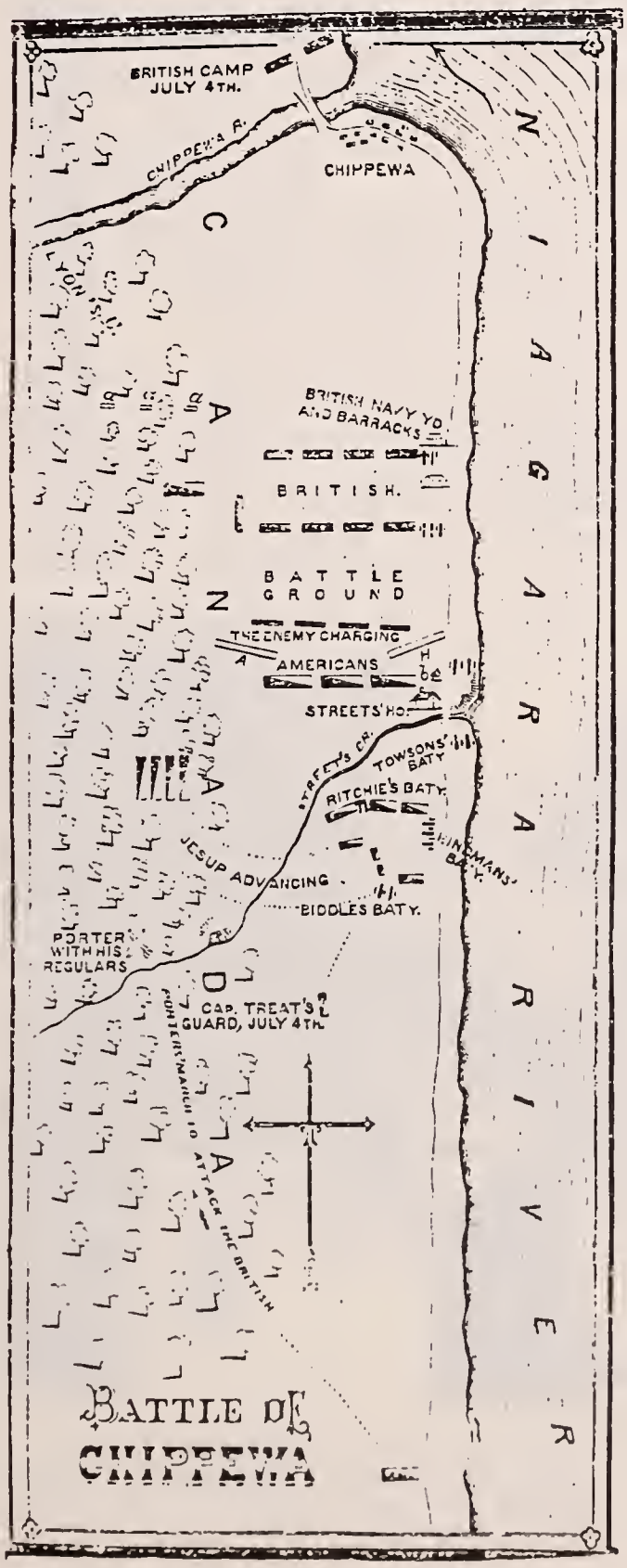
Soldiers Marching Up And Down

December 19, 1813

Lewiston was destroyed by British troops crossing from Queenston and others coming south from Fort Niagara, moving with impunity on soil of the United States.

December 29, 1813

Major General Phineas Riall led 1000 British troops across the river from Fort Erie, swept American resistance aside and burned Black Rock and Buffalo to the ground, destroyed 5 war vessels and returned to the western bank. By New Year's Day, 1814, Buffalo was a cinder smoking in the snow and Black Rock, Lewiston, Youngstown, Manchester, Schlosser and Tuscarora Village were heaps of rubbish. A strip of land 12 miles wide and 36 miles long had been devastated.



July 3, 1814

American forces under Major General Jacob Brown crossed the river from Buffalo and landed a short distance below Fort Erie. With them were the troops of Brigadier General Winfield Scott (exchanged) who had been drilling 10 hours a day for seven days a week for three months. The Fort was captured along with its garrison. There were 480 militiamen of the Pennsylvania Brigade with Brown's army.

Major General Jacob Brown

July 4, 1814

By nightfall, Brown's army was encamped on the Canadian side south of Street's Creek. The British under Riall were grouped north of the Chippawa River. On the morning of the 5th the armies converged. The fighting was fierce and both sides suffered heavy casualties. Scott's brigade demonstrated the value of its training. The British retreated north of the Chippawa and beyond.

Soldiers Marching Up And Down

July 7, 1814

General Riall withdrew to Fort George and Burlington Heights. Brown's American army occupied Queenston, which had been evacuated by the British. Brown left garrisons in Queenston, Chippawa and Erie.

July 19, 1814

The Americans burned St. Davids to the ground (40 houses), set fires at Queenston which did little damage, then withdrew to a point south of the Chippawa River.

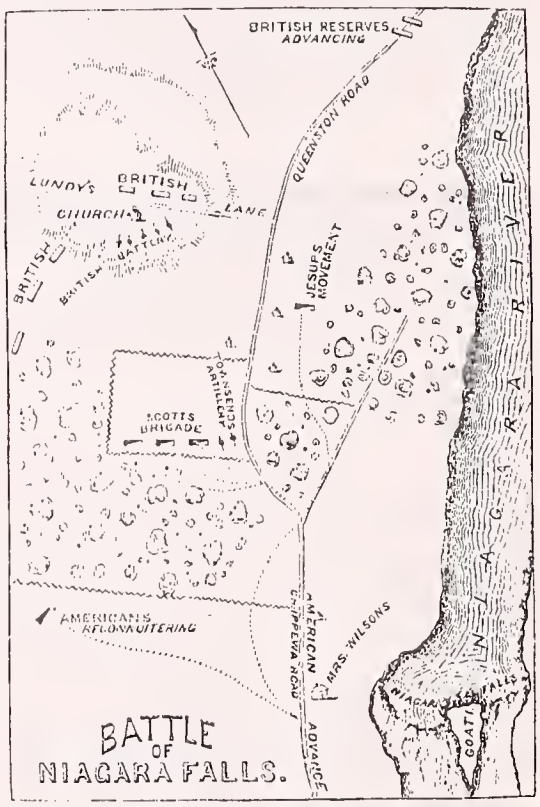
July 24, 1814

British forces moved forward as Americans withdrew southward. They assumed positions all along Lundy's Lane, west of Niagara Falls.

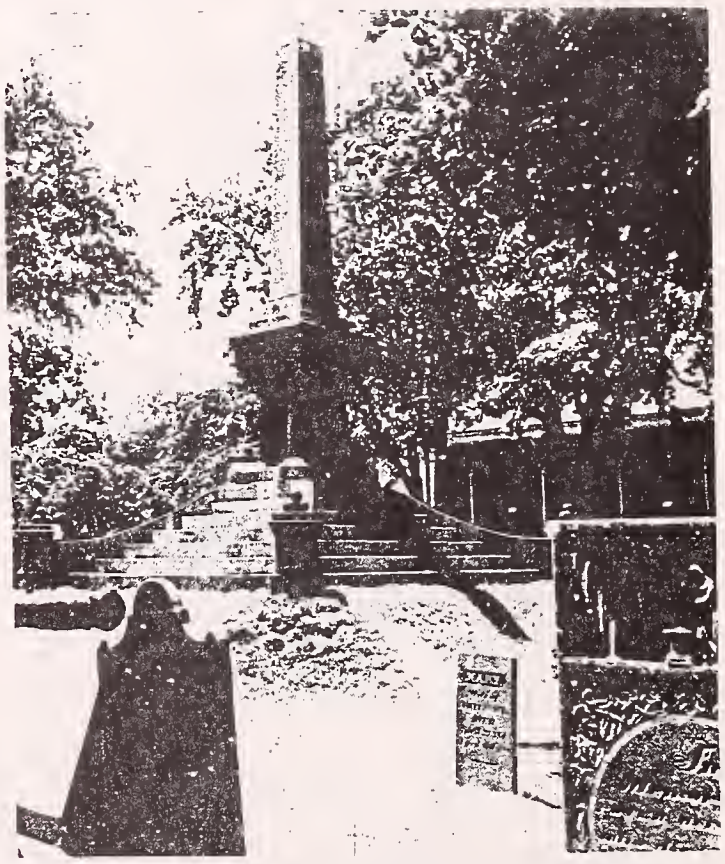
July 25, 1814

A brigade of 500 British crossed the river at Lewiston but found no Americans there. They returned to the Canadian side.

Winfield Scott's troops, including the 9th, 11th, 22nd and 25th Infantry Regiments, moved north to Lundy's Lane, and attacked Riall's forces there. The engagement began at 5:00 PM. At midnight, men were aiming at the positions of musket flashes at 20 paces range. Each side drew off after very heavy casulaties. Generals Brown, Scott, Riall and Drummond were wounded. Both sides claimed victory. The engagement is usually called the Battle of Lundy's Lane but some refer to it as the Battle of Niagara Falls.



Artist C. W. Jefferys illustrates an episode from the bloodiest encounter during the War of 1812—the Battle of Lundy's Lane. Neither side could claim victory after the contest. The casualty list totalled more than 1700.



Surrounded by old tombstones, the Lundy's Lane monument rises from the burial grounds on Drummond Hill in Niagara Falls, Ont., in memory of those who fell on July 25, 1814.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Soldiers Marching Up And Down

August 4, 1814

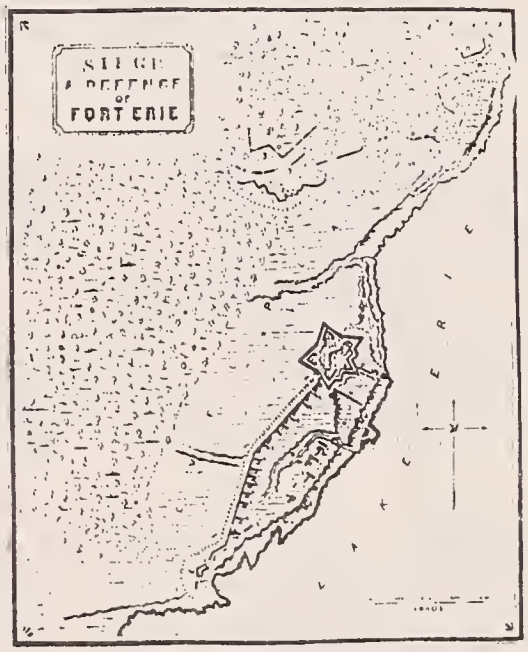
600 British troops crossed the Niagara to attack Black Rock and to destroy military stores at both places. American riflemen at Conjocheta Creek repulsed them. Here the accuracy of rifles settled the issue.

August 13, 1814

The British began a heavy bombardment of Ft. Erie, still occupied by the Americans.

August 14-15, 1814

The British directly assaulted the Fort on August 14th in the afternoon, but at 6:00 AM of the 15th they were repulsed with heavy casulaties, including 538 captured. The attackers that were left retired to a system of batteries 500 yards from the Fort.



September 17, 1814

Americans attacked the batteries in a heavy rain. The raid was partially successful, but the British abandoned the only battery left in their hands.

September 21, 1814

The British terminated its seige of Fort Erie and withdrew first to Chippawa, then to Fort George.

November 5, 1814

The Americans evacuated Fort Erie and blew it up. There were now no Americans on the Niagara peninsula.

February 16, 1815.

The Treaty of Ghent ends the war. And now the guns fall forever silent along the 40 mile strip between Ontario and New York.

Jared Ingersoll (84 W - Chart J - 6th Generation) was born June 25, 1786 at Pittsfield, Massachusetts. He entered the US Army at the commencement of the War of 1812 as a Lieutenant in the 9th Infantry Regiment. He was said to have served with conspicuous bravery. We have no particulars of the engagement involved but we do know that the 9th Infantry was a part of the force of Major General Jacob Brown at Chippawa and at Lundy's Lane.

Robert Secor Ingersoll (125 H - No Chart - 5th Generation) was born February 11, 1793. he was a soldier in the American Army in the War of 1812, and was serving with it in Buffalo when it was burned December 29-30, 1813.

Soldiers Marching Up And Down

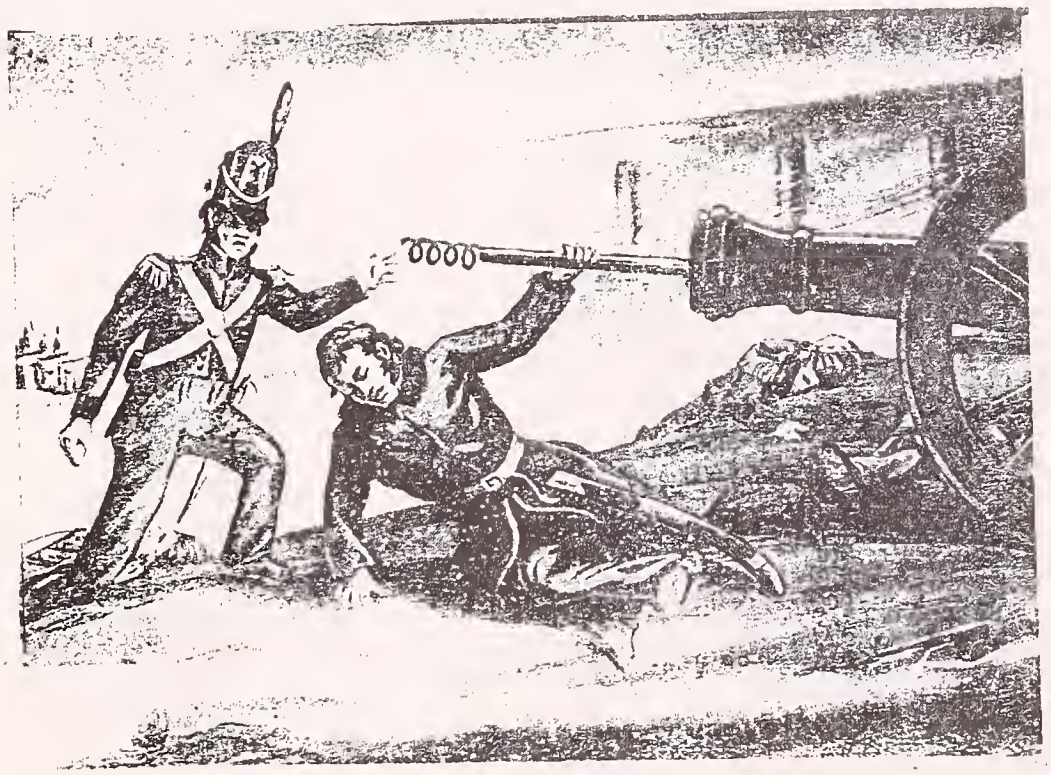
Justus Ingersoll (75 H - Chart I - 5th Generation) was born in 1794 in Dutchess Co. New York. At the outbreak of the War of 1812 he entered the army as an Ensign in 23rd regiment of infantry. He participated in the attack on Queenston in October, 1812 and was promoted to the rank of Captain. (He was either wounded in the Queenston fight and brought back to the American side or was captured and subsequently exchanged or paroled.) His regiment was one of those involved in the Chippawa and Lundy's Lane battles.

In one battle he was wounded in the foot. Refusing to leave the company and being unable to walk he mounted a horse and continued with his men. In another engagement he was shot through the body, the ball lodging in a rib. He refused to have it removed as he was informed a portion of the rib would have to be cut away which would probably cause him to stoop over ever after in his gait. He was esteemed by General Scott under whom he served. He resided in Medina, N.Y. where he was Indian agent and postmaster.

Ebenezer Ingersoll (39 H - Chart I - 4th Generation) was born October 25, 1768 in Westchester County, N.Y. He settled in Erie County in 1803 and kept a tavern at the mouth of Eighteen Mile Creek. They were "much annoyed by the British and Indians in the War of 1812."

Lucy Ingersoll (366 W - No Chart - 7th Generation) was born August 28, 1819 and on December 28, 1839 she married John Kelley, who was born in 1808. John's father was killed in the Battle Of Lundy's Lane.

Josiah Ingersoll (180 S - Chart D - 7th Generation) was born September 17, 1772 at Gloucester, Mass. He was a mariner. He served in the War of 1812 as Captain of a company designated "Captain Josiah Ingersoll's Company of Sea Fencibles." He was in New York service from August 10, 1814 to March 3, 1815. He served as Port Warden of New York 1820-1839.



Fort Erie, manned by a force of only 150 men, was seized, after a gallant defence, in July 1814 by a strong force of Americans. Later that same summer, the Americans were able to throw back a British force of some 2200 men. The heroic defence of the fort's block house is depicted in this copy of an old stone engraving of a drawing by Clay.

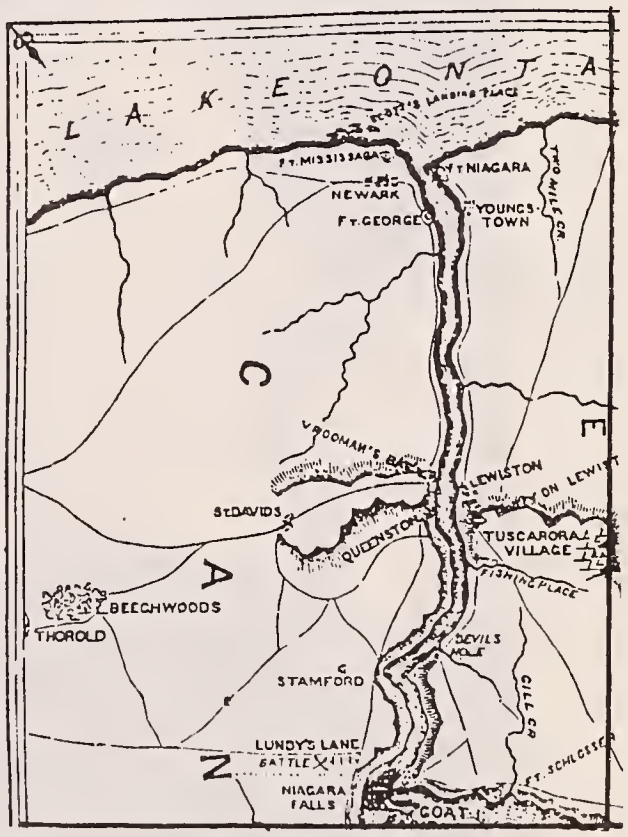
Canadian Heroine

Laura Ingersoll (85 W - Chart J - 6th Generation)

Laura was born in December, 1775 at Great Barrington, Mass., the daughter of Thomas Ingersoll and his first wife Elizabeth (Dewey) Ingersoll. When her family moved to Canada in 1793, Laura accompanied them.

Shortly afterward, Laura married James Secord, who was born July 7, 1773 in New Rochelle, New York, the son of James and Madelaine (Badeau) Secord. Madelaine fled to Canada as a refugee with her three-year -old son while her husband fought for the British in a Loyalist regiment during the Revolution. The young James was the grandson of John Secord (of Huguenot descent) who found dubious fame in the Wyoming Valley of Pennsylvania. There is more about him in our story of the Wyoming Massacre.

The story of the Battle of Queenston Heights on October 13, 1812, is narrated a little earlier in these annals. The result was a thumping victory for the British, Canadian and Indians and a serious and disgraceful set-back for the Americans. At the time Laura and James were living on a farm near St. Davids, a village a short distance from Queenston.



During the battle, James, a Canadian militiaman, was seriously wounded; Laura found him on the field after the defeat of the Americans and somehow lugged him home. Eight months later, he was still recuperating there, not yet able to walk far or do much.

The Second Invasion

In mid-summer of 1813 the Americans had recovered somewhat from the previous fiasco at Queenston. An American fleet had destroyed the capital of Upper Canada at York (Toronto) and ground forces had taken Ft. George and Fort Erie at the mouth and source of the Niagara River, respectively. The Americans had pushed forward as far as Stoney Creek, where they were defeated and forced to retreat to Queenston and Ft. George. A British and Indian encampment at Beaver Dams (Dam), near Thorold, on the road to Stoney Creek served as a base for harrassment of the Americans.

A Whispered Conference

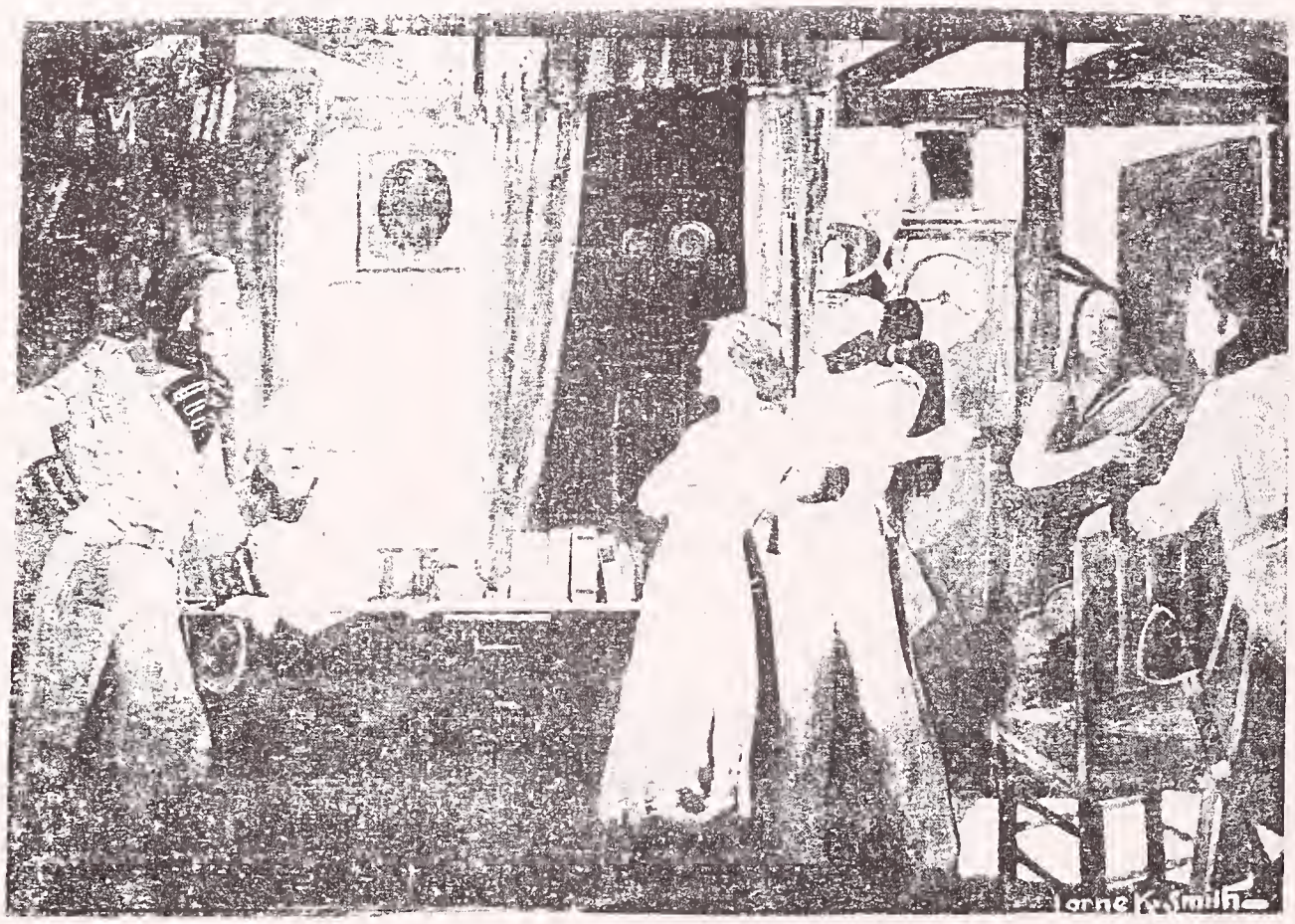
The invaders had plundered the Secord's home a few weeks before and now several American officers were billeted in it, uninvited. On June 23, James and Laura overheard the officers discussing a raid on the British outpost at Beaver Dams, to take place the following day.

The Secords, understandably eager to get rid of their unwelcome guests, talked it over in whispers in their bedroom. They decided that someone should warn their compatriots of the pending attack. Laura was elected since James' leg was still too gimpy for a long trek.

Canadian Heroine

Perilous Journey

At dawn, June 24, 1813, Laura set out, 38 [33] years of age, barefoot in the dewy grass, carrying a milk pail and leading their cow. Her story that she was taking the cow to the forest for milking, silly as it may seem, so impressed the sleepy and gullible sentries that they let her pass without hindrance. Once clear, she abandoned the pail and the cow and walked on, through brushy forest and swampy ground. Six hours and 20 [19][25] miles later she fast-talked her way through a group of Caughnawaga Indians. Finally, hot, exhausted, disheveled and distraught, she delivered her warning to the English commandant, Lieutenant Fitzgibbon. He thanked her, saw to her comfort, but refrained from telling her that he had already received word of the impending raid from Indian scouts.



Years later, Lt. Colonel James Fitzgibbon, released the following statement;

> "I do hereby certify that Mrs. Secord, wife of James Secord, of Chippewa, did in the month of June, 1813, walk from her house, near the village of St. David's to De Cou's house in Thorold by a circuitous route of about twenty miles, partly through the woods to acquaint me that the enemy intended to attempt, by surprise, to capture a detachment of the 49th Regiment, then under my command, she having obtained such knowledge from good authority, as the event proved. Mrs. Secord was a person of light and delicate frame and made the effort in weather excessively warm, and I dreaded at the time she must suffer in health in consequence of fatigue and anxiety, she having been exposed to danger from the enemy, through whose lines of communication she had to pass. The attempt was made on my detachment by the enemy and his detachment, consisting of upwards of 500 men and a field piece and 50 dragoons, were captured in consequence. I write this certificate in a moment of much hurry and from memory, and it is therefore thus brief. Signed James Fitz Gibbon, formerly Lieutenet 49th Regiment."

Canadian Heroine

Perilous Journey, continued

Laura was called upon many times to relate the story. The following comes down to us as an authentic direct quote:

> "By this time, daylight had left me. Here I found all the Indians encamped; by moonlight the scene was terrifying ..... Upon advance to the Indians, they all rose and with some yells said, 'Woman,' which made me tremble. I cannot express the awful feeling it gave me, but I did not lose my presence of mind."

The next day - another American catastrophe. Lt. Colonel Boerstler and his column of over 500 men with two cannon fought for three hours and then surrendered. This decision to surrender was questioned, as are most military decisions that do not lead to victory. The Colonel contended that he surrendered to avoid a massacre of his entire force by the Caughnawagas. Odd, since his force outnumbered the enemy.

Fame But No Fortune

Thus Canada acquired a heroine - Laura Secord - whose name is engraved forever in stone and on countless candy boxes.

In 1860, the future Edward VII of England, then Prince of Wales, visited Canada and had come to Niagara to watch the wire-walker Blondin. He had never heard of Laura and her feat until then. Finding that she was still alive he sent her a check for 100 pounds. [Another story says he presented her with 100 gold sovereigns.]

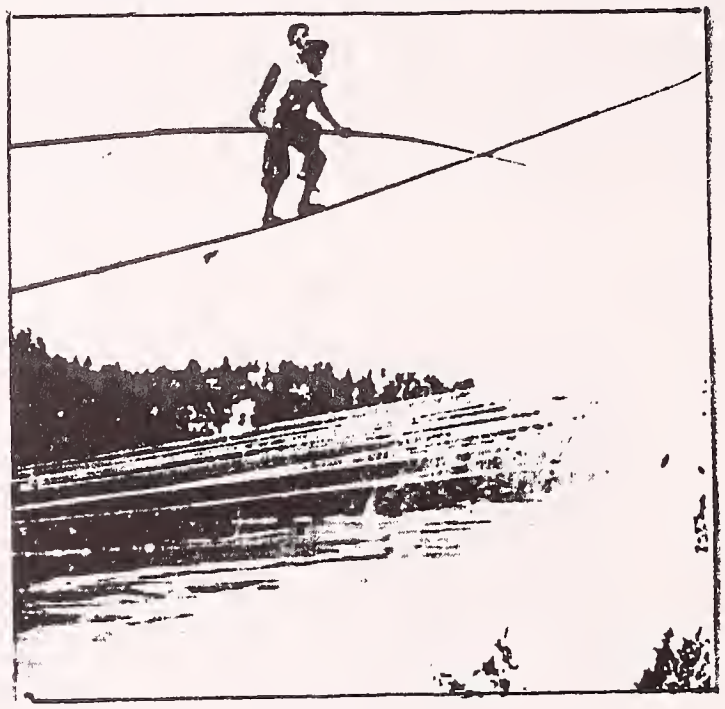
Below is a picture of young Edward taken in 1859 and a copy of a picture taken at his marriage to Princess Alexandra of Denmark in 1863.

On the next page are some pictures regarding Blondin and his wire-walking feats.

Canadian Heroine

Blondin

Here are reproductions of an advertising poster publicizing his dare-devil walks acoss the Falls and the gorge, an early photograph of an actual crossing of the gorge with Harry Colcord on his back and a photograph taken when he was older.



Laura Secord Candy

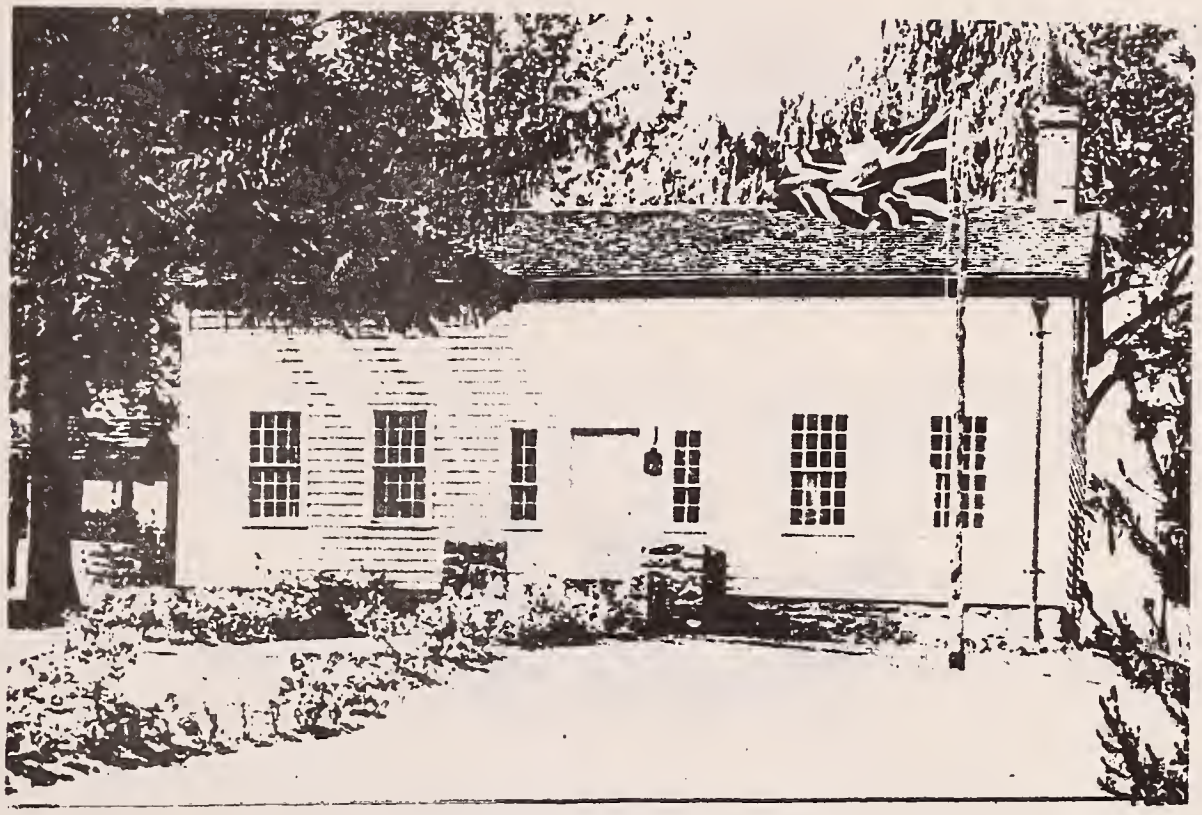
I do not know when the Laura Secord Candy Company was formed, nor why that name was selected for their chocolates. nor what financial arrangements were made with Laura's heirs, if any. At one time the Laura Secord Candy Company operated stores across Canada, much like the Fanny Farmer candy stores in the United States.

Laura's house waited a long time for recognition as a historic site. It was privately owned until 1969 when the candy company purchased it. It was in bad shape but was rebuilt and furnished with pine chairs and period kitchen utensils. It is open to the public. Athletic tourists are welcome to follow the trail of Laura's long hike. Maps are provided, but you must bring your own pail and cow.

There is a picture of Laura's house, restored, on the following page.

Canadian Heroine

Memorials



Laura Secord's House

On June 24, 1913, the centennial of her adventure, a bust of Laura, mounted on a granite pedestal, was erected in Queenston Heights Park. A picture of it is reproduced here. The words of the inscription, sometimes hard to decipher, are repeated at the right.

Inscription Reads:
The Name and Fame of
Laura Secord
Who walked alone nearly 20 miles by a circuitous, difficult and perilous route through woods and swamps and over miry roads to warn a British outpost at De Cews Falls of an intended attack and thereby enabled Lieut. Fitzgibbon on the 24th of June 1813 with less than 50 men of HM 49 Regt.,about 15 militia men and a small force of Six Nations and other Indians under William Johnson Kerr and Domenique Ducharme to surprise and attack the enemy at Beechwoods (or Beaver Dams) and after a short engagament to capture Col. Boerstler of the U.S. Army and his entire force of 542 men with two field pieces.

Canadian Heroine

Finale

Laura never received any sort of compensation from the Canadian Government. She and James had seven children, six girls and a boy. Some of these may have been at home at the time of the American occupation.

James died in 1841. Laura lived until 1868 as an impoverished widow. They are buried in Lundy's Lane.

Here's Blondin Crossing Alone
1859

Here's Maria Spelterini Crossing
Alone sometime later and
looking good

Sources - The Ingersoll Family

Genealogies

I used two older, published genealogies in satisfying my curiosity about Ingersolls. The Genealogy of the Ingersoll Family in America 1629-1925 by Lillian Drake Avery is a fine big book of fine print on 585 pages dealing with many people and years. Mrs. Avery (a gggggg granddaughter of John Ingersoll of Westfield) undertook a big job and persevered until it was done, or until she could say she was finished with it. She had some committee help, but she was the one who made it go. We owe her. In 1991-1992, of course, there is a gap of almost seventy years since the date of the latest information she recorded.

Lillian's parents were Sarah Elizabeth Chadwick Drake and Reverend Eastman Francis Marion Drake. Her maternal grandparents were Sally Ingersoll (138vi W) Chadwick and Samuel Chadwick. Sally was a sixth generation descendant of John Ingersoll of Westfield.

This book has separate sections for the families of each of the brothers Richard and John who came here in 1629 and for their second cousin or great-nephew John who arrived in 1654. The three are distinguished by their principal places of residence, Richard of Salem, John of Westfield, John of Huntington.

In Mrs. Avery's book generations are designated by consecutive ordinal numbers (first, fifth, ninth). Individual descendants carry sequential cardinal numbers (123, 365, 565). A descendant's children are listed and numbered in order of birth, using lower case Roman numerals - 123iii). For those who have a copy of Mrs. Avery's work, I have used identity blocks based on her arrangement. I have assigned the initials S, W and H as location codes. A generation label completes the descendant identification.

Charts are used to trace the lines of descent of some of the people mentioned in the text. These charts are identified by capital letters assigned in alphabetic sequence. If a person appears on a chart, the appropriate chart letter will appear in the identity block used in the text (123 S - Chart E - 5th Generation). The charts do not cover all Ingersolls. Some Ingersolls shown on the charts may not be specifically mentioned in the text, but must appear on the charts to preserve continuity.

The Ingersolls of Hampshire by Lt. Charles Stedman Ripley, originally published in 1893, is a smaller book with 107 pages of larger print. It deals only with some of the descendants of John of Westfield. This author uses the county name of Hampshire rather then the town name Westfield. Why? Who knows? This is a valuable reference but Lt. Ripley had limited goals and was constrained by them. He is listed in Mrs. Avery's book but she is not mentioned in his.

Charles Ripley was the son of Hannah Jencks Ingersoll Ripley and Charles Phelps Huntington Ripley, who was a direct descendant of William Bradford of the Mayflower. Charles Ripley's maternal grandfather was Major Edward Ingersoll, a ggg grandson of the initial John of Westfield.

Other Research

I've read or consulted a lot of books in researching this stuff. Some I read more carefully than others because of their relevance or lack of it. For the benefit of anyone who wants to wade through it, I have a bibliography of sorts. If the river doesn't rise it will appear somewhere near the index, the spot in which these things are usually hidden.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

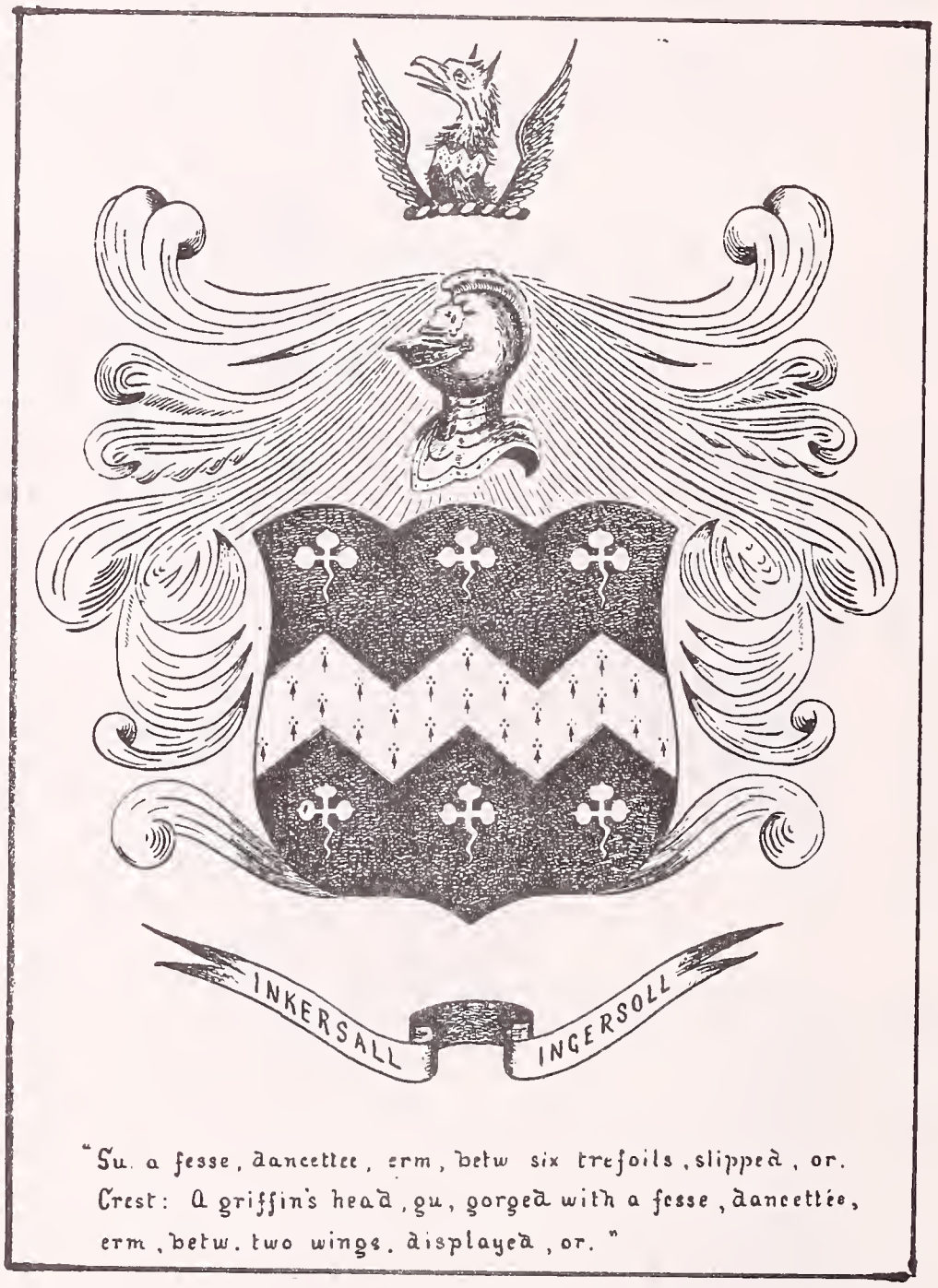
Explorations In The Ingersoll Line

Whence Ingersoll?

Early on, I talked (and talked and talked) about the derivation of the surname Wiswell. Most of the talk was wasted since the arguments presented were inconclusive, to put it more graciously than it deserves.

There was a lesson there, but I did not learn it. Instead I now begin an investigation of the derivation of Ingersoll. And, as you may have guessed, I am again mired, but in another swamp.

These explanations are offered for their interest and sometimes entertaining contradictions.



"Su. a fesse, dancettee, erm, betw six trefoils, slipped, or.
Crest: A griffin's head, gu, gorged with a fesse, dancettée, erm, betw. two wings, displayed, or."

The Ripley Version

Charles Stedman Ripley's book, The Ingersolls of Hampshire states:

"The surname Ingersoll was originally written in England as Inkersall and was corrupted into Ingersoll, either just before or about the time of the settlement of the family in America."

According to Ripley, a coat-of-arms was embroidered by Ann Ingersoll of Westfield in 1758 from designs she had from her ancestors. It is illustrated here. Ripley claims that he had found old coats-of-arms of Inkersall of Hertfordshire and Middlesex, the emblazonments of which were identical to the embroidered design of Ann's work. Note that both Inkersall and Ingersoll are shown thereon.

Ripley then goes on:

"This seems almost conclusive evidence that the Ingersoll arms were not invented, but that they were inherited through generations, and that Inkersall was the original name of the family. The arms were recorded at the College of Arms in the beginning of the 17th century, borne by Robert Ingersoll of Weston, Hertfordshire, who inherited them from his father in the latter part of the 16th century.

"In the coat-of-arms the visor of the helmet is closed and faced to the right (looking at the arms, it faces the left) showing that the person who was originally given the right to bear arms was a gentleman, and that he was born in wedlock."

Explorations In The Ingersoll Line

The Ripley Version, continued

I might point out that there are two Westons in each of two shires, and that there is one Weston in each of ten shires in England. This makes things easier?

Here are genealogical data about our arms embroiderer, Anne Ingersoll (11viii W - No Chart - 4th Generation) was born in Westfield June 21, 1737, the daughter of Thomas Ingersoll (40 W - Chart J - Third Generation). She married Colonel Sluman of the British army.

The Avery Version

Mrs. Lillian Drake Avery, in her big book about the Ingersolls takes some exception to Ripley's position regarding which name is a corruption of the other. The following is quoted directly:

"Ingersoll Name and Origin - the name 'Inge' is Scandinavian and is first identified as the name of a celebrated Scandinavian Chieftain or Lord by the name of 'Ingebar' who came into England with the invading Danish folk and settled in Middlesex and adjoining counties. This 'Ingebar' bequeathed his name as a surname to a large number of English families, as for instance such family names as Inglis, Ingram, Ingolsby, Ingelow, Ingerson, Ingleside, Inge and Ingersoll. It may be noted here that Inge, son of Harold, King of Norway, lived in the 12th century. (Patronymica Brittanica - Lower)

"The name Ingersoll is partly Scandinavian and partly of French origin. The name is not a corruption of Inkersall. The reverse is true, and in all cases, whether of localities or persons where the name Inkersall is used, it is plain corruption of Ingersoll. The surname 'Inge' has a definite meaning and origin. 'Ink' has no meaning at all. The age was an illiterate one, and nearly all surnames are misspelled in public records.

"The name Ingersoll (Inkersall) is due to a combination of the surname 'Inge' with the French word 'Sale' which is the old French meaning for 'house.' The first form of the name, therefore, was Ingersale. This form gradually changed to Ingersole and finally to its present form Ingersoll. It should be noted that the name Ingersoll may possibly have been formed by combination of the Scandinavian word 'Inge' with the Scandinavian word hail, holl or all. The name appears in Beowolf. The Ingersolls (Inkersalls) were found in the 15th century in Middlesex, Suffolk, Surry, Hampshire, Nottinghamshire and Bedfordshire. As far as may be ascertained from present sources of information, as an appellation of a family of English gentlemen, appeared first in Nottinghamshire and the family which originated there passed into Hertfordshire and possibly later to Hampshire and Bedfordshire."

Explorations In The Ingersoll Line

The Avery Version, Continued

While Mrs. Avery is explicit (and a mite testy) in disagreeing with Mr. Ripley regarding which name is pure, she pretty much agrees with him regarding the coat-of-arms. According to her, the known assignment of this coat-of-arms proceeded thus:

> Geoffrey Ingersoll (Inkersall) of Southwell, Nottingham, married, about 1590, Dorothy Moreigh of Moreigh Hall, Nottinghamshire. The coat of arms was originally his.
>
> It was inherited by their son, Robert Ingersoll (Inkersall) of Weston, Hertfordshire, who married Elizabeth Blower of Weston. He was one of the royal court (Gentleman of the Removing Wardrobe). Presumably he helped the King undress at night! Robert and Elizabeth had these children:
>
> Robert, who inherited the family estate
> John, born about 1640, who emigrated to America in 1654
> and became known as John Ingersoll of Huntington
> Grace, Elizabeth and Dorothy
>
> John Ingersoll of Huntington, Long Island, was related to Richard Ingersoll of Salem and his brother John Ingersoll of Hampshire (Westfield) but the exact relationship is not known. A comparison of their ages would indicate that Richard and his brother John were the other John's great-uncles or perhaps second cousins.

Other Opinion

The two accounts outlined above are by descendants of the older Ingersolls. They contradict each other in one major aspect but are otherwise pretty much in agreement. Let us hear, now, from disinterested outsiders.

The Dictionary of Surnames states: Inkersall - English - Habitation name from a place in Derbyshire recorded in the 13th century as Hinkershil(l), and variously, Ingersall, Inkersole and Ingsole. The final element is clear Old English hyll (hill). The first may be the personal name Inqvarr (see Inger) or an Old English by-name meaning 'Limper.' Eksall suggests that it may represent a contracted version Old English Higna Œcer, monk's field.

Surnames Are Fossils of Speech also gets into the act with: (Ed. note - evidently if you don't like the first explanation, try the second.)

Ingersoll 1. Native of Inkersall, a place in Nottingham. The early form of the name was Wirchenfeld (1086 A.D.). This meant 'field of Wycran', an Old English personal name. Confusion of r, l and n and still later the loss of the initial W and final 'l' led to the present form of the name.

2. Native of Inkersall, a place in Derbyshire. The name appears to be derived from Old English Higna-hyll or Higna-halh, the first 'hill of the monks', the second 'glen of the monks.'

Explorations In The Ingersoll Line

Other Opinion, continued

Just one more, The Dictionary of American Family Names says;

Ingers, Ingerson (Eng.) - The son of Inger (Ing's army)

Ingersoll, Ingersol (Eng.) - One who came from Inkersall (the monk's field)

Ingerson, Ingwer (No.) - The son of Ingvar (Ing's army)

There you have it. Take your pick. I make no recommendations.

Mrs. Avery, in her really prodigious book, lists several branches of the family as Ingersons, down to modern times (1925).

This was evidently the Ingerson beginning. Jonathan Ingersoll (16 H - No Chart-4th Generation) who lived from 1735 to 1810. Sometime between 1790 and 1799 he moved to Greenfield, Saratoga County, New York, and ever after was known as Ingerson, as were all of his descendants.

Richard Ingersoll of Salem

Richard Ingersoll (1 S - Charts A, D, E, F, G, H - 1st Generation)

Richard Ingersoll was born in England about 1595. On December 20, 1616, in Sands, he married Ann [Agnes] Langley. They had five children born in Bedfordshire, George, John, Alice, Sarah and Bathsheba.

Richard, Ann, their children and Richard's younger brother John were aboard the Mayflower when it sailed from Gravesend, near the mouth of the Thames River in mid-March, 1629, bound west for Plymouth Colony.

The Mayflower
1629

The Mayflower arrived in Plymouth on May 15, 1629. The Ingersolls remained there only a few weeks. They moved to and settled in Salem on June 29, 1629. This was evidently on a predetermined schedule. Nathaniel, their third son and sixth child was born in Salem in 1632. More about him later.

In the original list of householders receiving "House lotts graunted by ye town," (1638), Richard was given two acres and 80 acres on "the Cape Ann side." This probably refers to open country across the narrow bay to the north. Later there was "graunted to Richard Ingersoll 30 acres of meadow in the great meadow layd out by the town." In 1640 he was alloted more acres, I know not where.

Like other men in Salem, Richard was a farmer, a hunter, a carpenter, whatever he needed to be, but he had a profitable side line. The spelling in the following announcement is exactly as it appears in the town records:

> It is agreed that Richard Inkersall shall henceforth have one peny (a tyme to maintain the ferry) for every pson he doeth ferry over the north (ferry) river during the towns pleasure.

John Endicott

Richard died in Salem in 1644, evidently soon after drawing his will on July 21st of that year. He signed with an "X", which was witnessed by John Endicott, Governor of the Colony and later the Governor of Rhode Island. A few of the items on the inventory of his assets provide an idea of the comparative values at that time and place.

7 Cows	£ 34	2 Horses and mare	
2 Young steers	4	with young colt	£ 25
1 Bull	7	80 Acre farm	7

The inventory also included a "moose skin suit" to which no value was given.

Richard's widow Ann married John Knight, a widower merchant-tailor of Newbury. In 1647 Ann's daughter Bathsheba married John Knight, Jr., son of the man who married her mother. Thus Ann was mother-in-law and step-mother to John, Jr. and John, Sr. was father-in-law and step-father to Bathsheba. John Jr. and Bathsheba were step-brother and sister as well as man and wife. If you think this was a closely knit family, wait until you hear about the marriages of the children of Bathsheba and John, Jr.

John Ingersoll of Westfield

John Ingersoll (1 W - Chart J - first Generation)

John Ingersoll, the first of that name in America, was born in England in 1615 and came to Salem with his older brother Richard on the 1629 voyage of the Mayflower. He lived with Richard and his family in Salem until Richard died in 1644. Some time later he moved to Hartford in Connecticut Colony, where he met and married Dorothy Lord in 1651, when she was 22. Dorothy was the daughter of Thomas and Dorothy Lord, early settlers of that place.

In 1655 John and Dorothy, with their two small daughters moved to Northampton in Massachusetts Colony. Dorothy died there in January, 1656, giving birth to their third daughter. John married Abigail Bascom on December 12, 1657. She was the daughter of Thomas Bascom, one of the first settlers in Windsor, Connecticut Colony, who later moved to Northampton.

Nine years later John, Abigail and their children moved to the place known to the Indians as Woronoco, which became Westfield, Massachusetts. In April of that year Abigail died, leaving John with a family of 7 children. Within a year, John married, for his third wife, Mary Hunt, daughter of John and Mary (Webster) Hunt. John Webster was an early pioneer of Hartford and became the 5th Governor of Connecticut Colony.

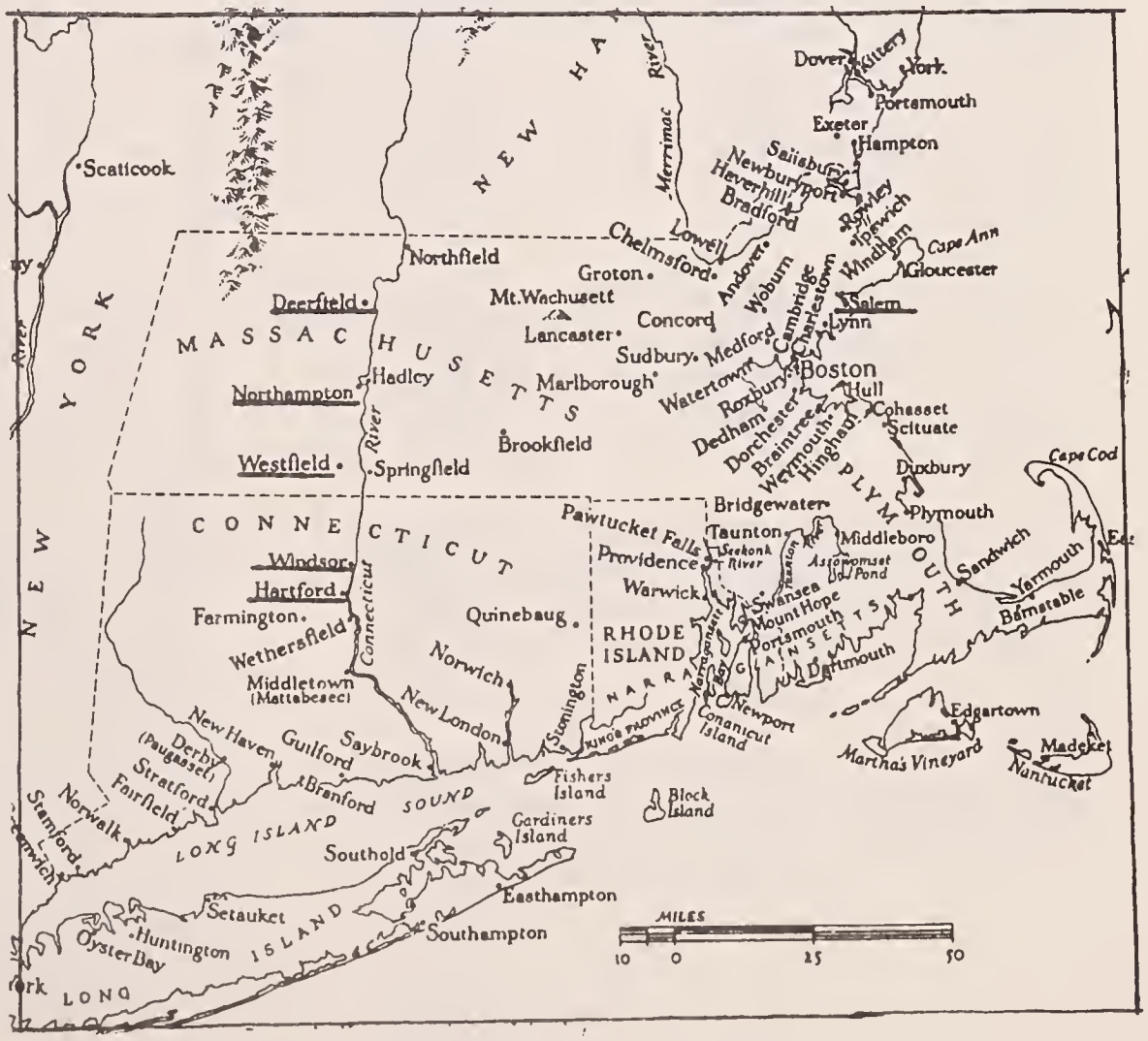
John and Mary had eight children, making a total of 15 for him. He was one of the "Seven Pillars" or "Foundation Men" who united in 1679 to form a church in Westfield.

Hester, the youngest child of John's second marriage, together with her younger half-brothers Joseph and Benjamin were victims of the Deerfield Massacre, described elsewhere.

The land granted to John in Westfield, on which he built his house, remained in the family for many generations and came to be known as Ingersoll Place.

John died in Westfield on September 3, 1684, Dorothy on August 18, 1690. They are buried in Westfield.

This map locates the places mentioned here, underlined.



The Essential Wiswell Trivia

The Long Island Ingersolls

John Ingersoll (1 H - Chart I - 1st Generation)

Early history of this John Ingersoll is fragmentary and vague. He was born in England about 1640, the second son of Robert Ingersoll and Elizabeth Blower Ingersoll of Weston, Hertfordshire. He was related, somehow, to the brothers Richard Ingersoll of Salem and John Ingersoll of Westfield. No one seems to know when John came to America but he first appears in the records of Huntington, Long Island in 1653.

Huntington was first settled by people from Connecticut Colony about 1650 and was formally established as a town in 1660. In 1674 it reverted to New York State.

John, in 1673, married Jane [Jeanne] (Skidmore) Whitehead, the widow of Daniel Whitehead. Daniel and Jane were the children respectively, of Daniel Whitehead and John Skidmore, grantees, founders and proprietors of the town.

Records show entries for Ingerson, Ingersole and Ingersoll families. They were all one and the same; here again spelling was free and easy and handwriting wasn't always legible. John and Jane had four children:

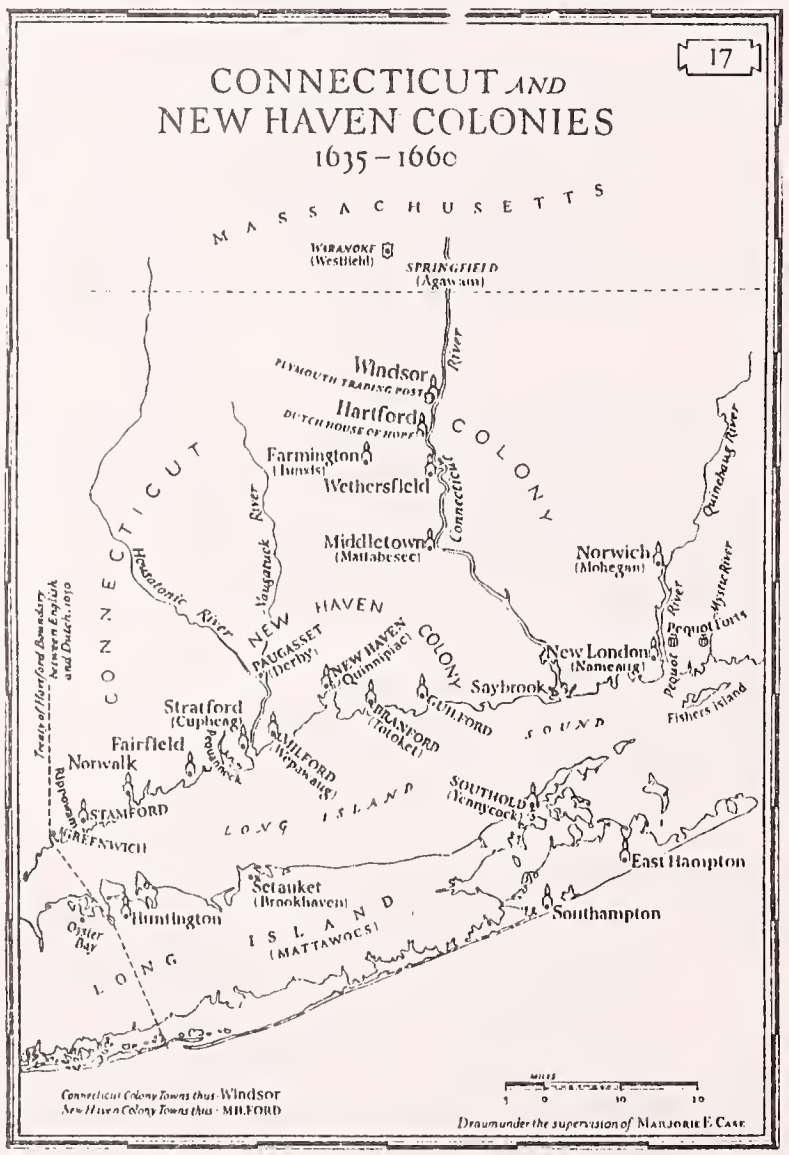
John, born 1674; Jane, born 1676; Simon, born 1678; Daniel, born 1680.

At one time John was warned by committeemen for violation of the innkeepers' law, which prohibited anyone but an innkeeper from entertaining guests. In this instance, John and Jane entertained a man, his wife and his two children. It's quite obvious that the innkeepers drafted that ordinance. Or perhaps someone with a mooching brother-in-law.

John died in 1695 and left a considerable estate in cash, farm land, buildings, forests, livestock. How much of this was property inherited by Jane is not specified.

John remained in Huntington the rest of his life. One son remained on Long Island but the others moved to Westchester County, N.Y. and to New Jersey.

This map will illustrate the movement of Connecticut Colony and New Haven Colony settlers into Long Island.



Odd Names a la Ingersoll

Naming Children

New parents mull long over names for their kids. Family traditions must be observed and rich aunts and uncles must be remembered. The sensitivities of grandparents must be considered. All these aside, the choice will conform to current baby-naming trends or express the imagination or mental confusion of mother and father, one or both. Rarely does a sense of humor or whimsy prevail.

The only related data available in quantity are those provided by Mrs. Avery's Ingersoll book. These are my selections of strange monikers foisted upon innocent Ingersoll newcomers. No names of in-laws, brides or grooms are included. Asterisks denote my favorites.

Girls			Boys	
Abiah	Elyonta	Marina	Almond	Lovius
Alena	Elzora	Mertie	Alpha Darius	Mahlon
Allena	Eupheme	Merzy Ann	Alpha Odell	Melch
Alline	Euphemia	Ola Belle	Alson	Merivale
Almena	Euphragia	Ona	Alvan	Nadean
Almenda	Flavilla	Orisa	Arlo	Naman
Almira	Florilla	Permina	Artemidorus	Nevy
Alrie	Florine	Persis	Ashbel	Olean
Alvena	Gerrene	Phademia	Asho	Orange J.
Alzada	*Grizzie Ann	Rachelette	Berlin	Orlino
Appollonia	Happylonia	Rivvia	Delno	Orlo
Arllie	Idella	Romain	Deodat	Orris
Arpha	Irena	Roselta	Denman	Drum
Arria	Izora	Roxey	Denzel	Panthus
Azariah	Josia	Ruhame	Eber	Ryel
Azuba	Ladorr	Sara Breta	Ebon	Scoby
Bethia	Laysett	Savilla	Eldad	Selmer
Bluma	Lelah	Sophronia	Elender	Thair
Calista	Leota	Tamina	Eliel	Vashti
Catha Cuane	Lexey	Terah	Emmerett	Vilon
Chestina	Lodica	Tryphenia	*Enuff	Volney
Chillian	Lomhamah	Valeria	Erson	Willet
Clemona	Lovica	Vassie	Erie	Wilmor
Dallas	Lovice	Viva	Feno	Wyllys
Delorain	Lovilla	Zadey	Fonce Green Hill	Zenas
Delvinia	Lovina	Zelie	Gurdon	Zery
Dessie	Livinia	Zellah	Gidney	
Dorcus	Lucena	Zillah	Heman	
Dorena	Lucina	Zima	Hulett	
Edris	Lura	Zipporah	Hutley	
Elba	Lura Aliba		Jace	
Electa	Luthera		Jerusha	
Electthra	Luzerne		Laman	
Elmaretta	Malinda		Laron	
Elva	Malvinia		Lemi	

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Matrimonial Mazes

Matrimonial Prospects in Early Colonial America

Most of the colonial Ingersoll families lived in small towns or hamlets. There might be a few houses, a store, a tavern which doubled as a meeting-house, a grist mill, maybe even a blacksmith's forge. Only the larger places had a church in a separate building. General meetings and social events were usually confined to the people in the immediate neighborhood. Girls didn't meet many boys; boys seldom had the time, funds and transportation for prospecting larger territories.

The law of supply and demand prevailed. Supply was limited and demand increased each year after puberty. Competition was fierce. Young widows and widowers were at a premium. Marriages were sometimes necessary (naturally) and often it may have been a case of settling for what you could get. Multiple marriages between families were not at all unusual.

In those days, marriages tended to last. While the original mutual attraction of young ladies and young men was influenced by availability and proximity to a large extent, the partners usually adapted and endured, and were fruitful.

Sisters, Brothers, Husbands, Wives

The cases of marriages between members of families described here are not all of those indicated in Mrs. Avery's book, but this is a fair sampling.

Bathsheba Ingersoll (6 S - No Chart - 2nd Generation) was born in England about 1627. She died October, 1705. In 1647 she married John Knight, Jr. of Newbury. I have noted earlier that her marriage to her mother's step-son created some strange marital relationships.

The children of Bathsheba and John, Jr. were also adept at creating confusion. Their son John married Rebecca Noyes. John's sisters Elizabeth and Mary married Rebecca's brothers Cutting and Timothy, respectively. The Knights' 8th and 9th children, Richard and Benjamin, married sisters Elizabeth and Abigail Jaques. Thus:

These Knights	Married
John, Elizabeth, Mary	Rebecca, Cutting, Timothy Noyes
Richard, Benjamin	Elizabeth and Abigail Jaques

Sarah Ingersoll (89 S - No Chart - 5th Generation) was born in 1702. She married Daniel Cressey in 1720. They had 11 children, 8 of them girls. Three of these girls married three brothers.

These Cresseys	Married These Ashleys
Mary, Ruth, Sarah	Abner, Samuel, Joseph

Richard Ingersoll (91 S - Chart H - 5th Generation) was born in 1705 and died in 1785. He had 11 children, 5 of them girls. Two of these, Ruth and Loas, married brothers Samuel and William Chamberlin, respectively.

Matrimonial Mazes

Sisters, Brothers, Husbands, Wives, continued

Samuel Ingersoll (105 S - Chart B - 6th Generation married Lydia (or Elizabeth) Look. They had 11 children, including 8 girls. One of these girls and one of her brothers married sister and brother Driscos.

These Ingersolls	Married These Driscos
William and Mary	Aseneth and Jeremiah

James Ingersoll (106 S - Chart B - 6th Generation) was born in 1786 and died in 1872. He married Margaret M. Wass in 1808. They had 5 boys and 3 girls. Two of the girls married brothers.

These Ingersolls	Married These Lows
Emma, Christiana	Lehigh, George W.

David Ingersoll (186 S - Chart E - 7th Generation) was born in 1782 and died in 1857. He married Zilphia Eastland, who died in 1855. They had 10 children, including six girls. Four of these girls married four Carlton brothers.

These Ingersolls	Married These Carltons
Polly, Roxey, Betsy and Rachel	Ira, Guy, Albert and Jacob

William Ingersoll (102 S - Chart B - 6th Generation) was born in 1779 and died in 1858. In 1804 he married Susanna Shaw. They had 16 children, 9 of them girls. Of these, 2 married brothers.

These Ingersolls	Married These Coffins
Margaret and Temperance	Jason and G.W.

Abigail Ingersoll (126 S - No Chart - 6th Generation) was born in 1770 and died in 1847. In 1788 she married William Sayward. They had six children, 3 of them girls. Of these, 2 married brothers.

These Saywards	Married These Friends
Mary and Caroline	George and Joseph

Dorothy Ingersoll (3 W - No Chart - 2nd Generation) was born in 1654. In 1672 she married Jacob Phelps. Three of their seven children were girls. Two of them married brothers.

These Phelpses	Married These Kibbes
Dorothy and Hannah	Edward and John

Margery Ingersoll (4 W - No Chart - 2nd Generation) was born in 1656. In 1679 she married John Goffe. They had 5 children, 2 of them boys. Of the three girls, two married brothers.

These Goffes	Married These Andruses
Mabel and Mary	Daniel and John

Have patience! There's only one more of these instances discussed here. It's a little more complicated than the previous cases. Bear with me.

Matrimonial Mazes

Sisters, Brothers, Husbands, Wives, continued

Daniel Ingersoll (10 H - Chart I - 3rd Generation) was born about 1705. He had daughters:

Hannah Ingersoll (43 H - No Chart - 4th Generation) was born about 1728. She married Andrew Steelman. They had, among others:

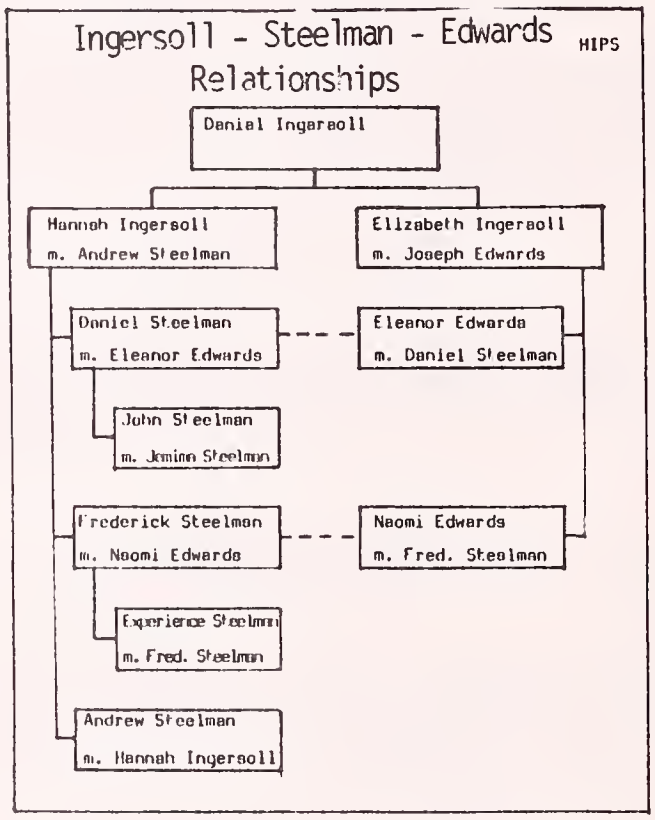
Daniel Steelman who married Eleanor Edwards.

Frederick Steelman who married Naomi Edwards.

Elizabeth Ingersoll (46 H - No Chart- 4th Generation) was born about 1734. She married Joseph Edwards. They had two daughters:

Eleanor Edwards who married Daniel Steelman.

Naome Edwards who married Frederick Steelman.



There we have it. Two sisters marry two brothers who are also the sisters' first cousins. Ergo: a melange of brothers, sisters, wives, cousins, sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law.

Daniel and Eleanor Steelman had a son John, whose paternal and maternal grandmothers were sisters. Most people have two maternal great-grandfathers, but John never had more than one -old Daniel. John himself contributed to the tangle by marrying a cousin, Jemima Steelman. I dare not speculate about their children.

Frederick and Naomi Steelman had a daughter, Experience, who experienced the same problems as her cousin John insofar as grand- and great-grandparents were concerned. Not to be outdone by John, Experience married a younger Frederick Steelman, another cousin. Wouldn't you say these people were inbreeding in depth?

But that's not all. Hannah Ingersoll Steelman and Andrew Steelman, Sr. had a son, Andrew, Jr. who tried to break the mold. He married one Hannah Ingersoll, widow of John Ingersoll (53 H - No Chart - 4th Generation) a cousin of Hannah Ingersoll Steelman and of Elizabeth Ingersoll Edwards.

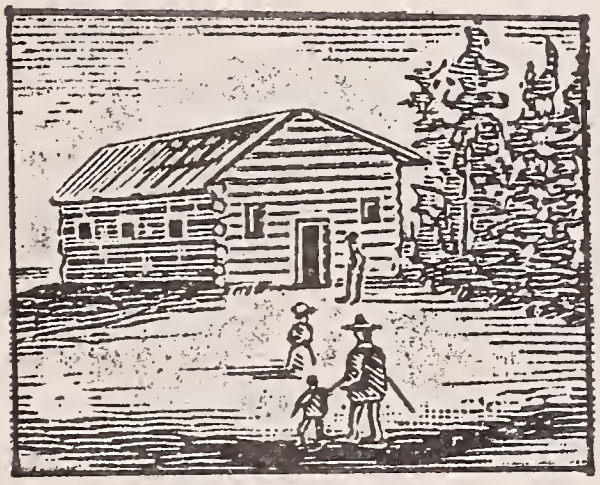
I'll get off this merry-go-round right now. The accompanying chart may help but I wouldn't want to carry it further. That way lies madness!

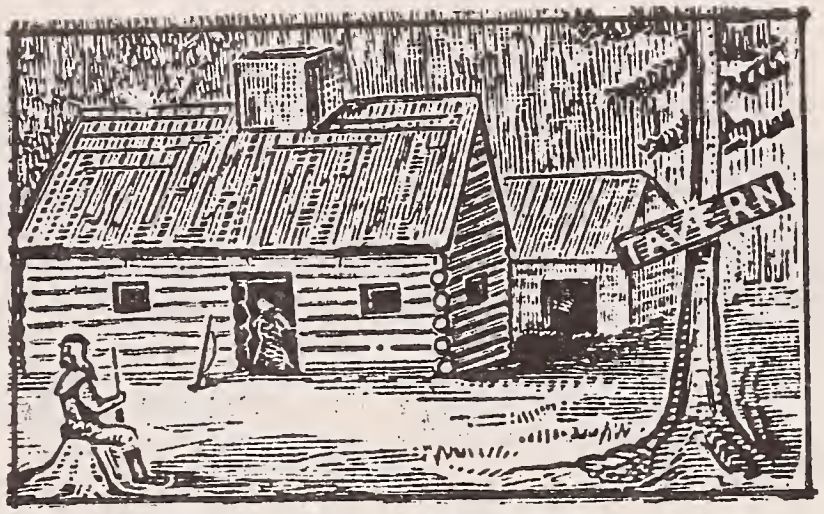
Ingersolls Down East

George Ingersoll (2 S - Charts A to F - 2nd Generation)

George, the eldest son of Richard and Ann, was born in England in 1618. In 1638 he applied for a "lott" of land in Salem, and "tenne" acres were "graunted" him. In 1642 there was "Graunted to George Ingersoll 20 acres of land to be laid out by the town as nere his other land at Enon as it may." He married Elizabeth ----- in 1642. They had eight children. Elizabeth predeceased him, I know not when.

Sometime before 1646 George left Salem and moved to Gloucester. There he was licensed to keep an ordinary and he owned some land. He sold out and settled in Back Cove, in Casco Bay, as early as June, 1657. He bought 55 acres from George Cleaves for 55 shillings, with an annual tribute of a shilling and a day's work. Below are pictures of a settler's cabin and a tavern in Falmouth during George's stay there.





In all such settlements the tavern was built early on. These people were religious but teetotallers they were not. Early taverns were used as churches, forts, schools, court houses, community meeting places, news centers.

George became a prominent citizen, holding public office and commanding the local militia with a lieutenant's commission issued to George Ingerfield. When his appointment as Selectman was recorded his name was spelled Ingersol.

King Philip's War

KING PHILIP, FROM AN OLD PRINT.

Philip, a son of Massosoit, called Metacomet by his own people, tried to honor his father's peace treaty with the Pilgrims and the land grants he had made. When it became impossible to do this without endangering the Indians' way of life, he turned to force. Allied with other tribes, similarly encroached upon, he began raiding the white settlements in 1675.

One of the bloodiest raids of King Philip's War was against Casco Bay. George Ingersoll's house and property were destroyed and his eldest son was killed. Philip was eventually killed and the war ended, but not until many communities had been decimated.

Ingersolls Down East

King Philip's War, continued

The local attack began on September 9, 1675 and George, in his position as militia commander wrote to a compatriot as follows"

> Leif; Augur,-
>
> Yesterday morning, being the 9th of September, was heard three Guns, and was seen a great smoke up in the River above Mr. Mackworth's: Whereupon I caused an alarme, but could not get the souldiers together by reason of which I was uncapable for that day to know the cause thereof, and what the issue might be; but this day, being the 10th of the said month, having strengthened myselfe, I went up with two fils, and when I came to the place, I found one house burnt downe, and six persons killed, and three of the same family could not be found. An old man and woman were halfe in and halfe out of the house neer halfe burnt. Their owne son was shot through the body, and also his head dashed in pieces. This young man's wife was dead, her head skined, she was bigg with child, two children having their heads dashed in pieces, and lay with another with their bellys to the ground, and an oak plank laid upon their backs. While we were upon this discovery we saw a smoke and heard two Guns about one mile or more above, in the same quarter. We judge there be a company of Indians, but how many we know not; therefore I would entreat Major Pendleton and yourselfe to send me, each of you, a dowzen men. I shall then goe to see whether it be according as we think or noe. Please post this away to Major Walden. Thus taking my leave, I subscribe myselfe,
>
> Your loving friend
>
> September 10, 1675 Leif: George Ingersoll

Like most other surviving Casco Bay residents, George and his family left the area, retreating as far as Salem. About five years later the Ingersolls returned to Casco Bay, rebuilt their property and prospered. Many others returned and contributed to the rehabilitation and growth of the community. George resumed many of his responsibilities as a community leader.

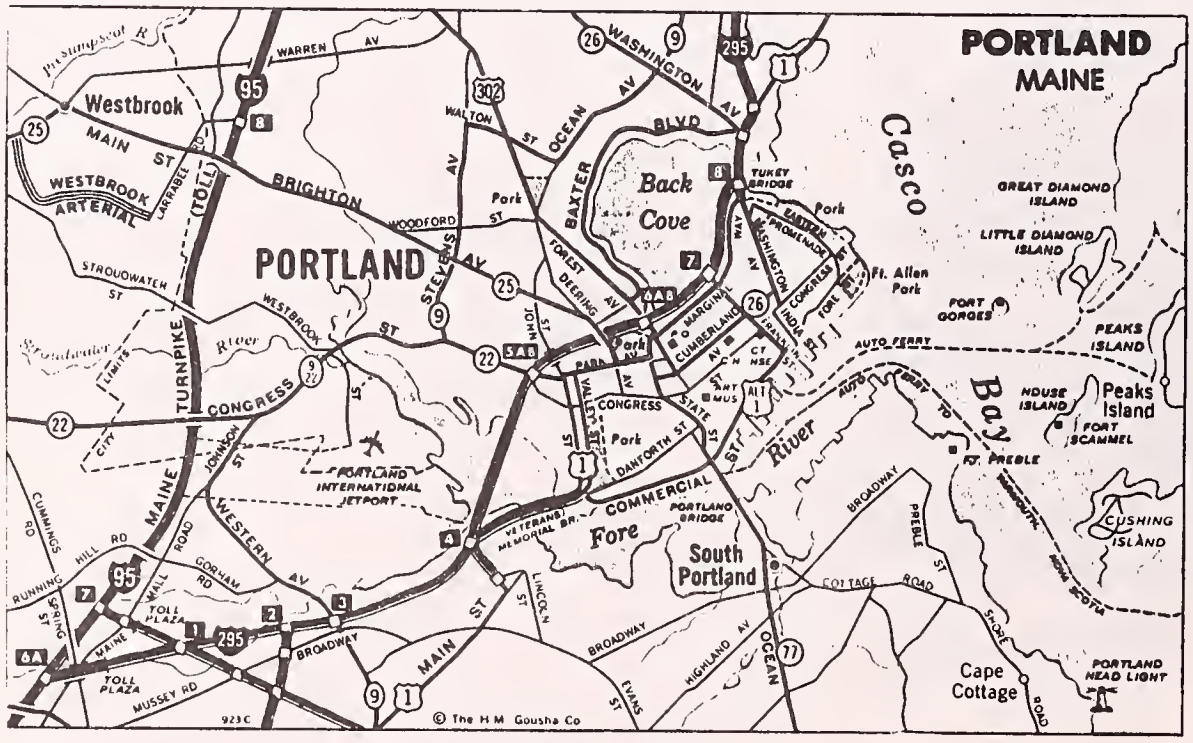
King William's War

When in 1689 the Indians again made threatening gestures, this time in league with French soldiers from Canada, George, 72 years old and deeming his property remote from the town's defenses, again withdrew to Salem. He was criticized for this but the subsequent destruction of the town in May, 1690 proved him right in assessing the situation. He retained title to much of his original property and some of his descendants eventually settled permanently in the area. Some were living there in the late 18th century. My guess is that some of them are still there.

George died in 1694.

Map of Portland

This map of modern Portland may enable you to place these events of three centuries ago.



The Deerfield Massacre

Hester Ingersoll (7 W - Chart J - 2nd Generation)

Hester was born September 9, 1665 in Westfield, Massachusetts. In 1684 she married William Gurley of Northampton. William was drowned in the Connecticut River on May 1, 1687 at the age of 22. Hester and William had a son, Samuel, who was born in 1686. There is more about him in the Postscript.

Hester was married, second, on January 23, 1689 to Benoni Jones. They had four children:

Jonathan, born January 4, 1695, died young.
Benjamin, born in 1696, who survived the massacre long enough to sire 9 children. He settled in Coventry, Ct.
Ebenezer, born November 12, 1698, killed February 29, 1704.
Jonathan, born March 3, 1703, killed February 29, 1704.

Queen Anne's War - The Leap Year Massacre

Queen Anne
1702-1714

The so-called Queen Anne's War was the North American phase of the War of the Spanish Succession, 1702-1713. When it was over, France ceded Nova Scotia, Hudson Bay and Newfoundland to the British,

This account of the raid by French soldiers and the Indians on the remote settlement of Deerfield, Mass., and the massacre of many of its inhabitants is derived from various sources. Some of these are quoted directly.

Lt. Ripley's book and that of Mrs. Avery both give this account. Since they are identical, they were obviously derived from a single source, un-named.

> "On May 13, 1704, the French and Indians made a descent upon Pascommuck and killed Benoni Jones and his two youngest children. One was five years old, and the other a babe of 14 months. Hester was captured and was taken to Canada as a prisoner. She was obliged, by her captors, to make the whole journey on foot, and suffered many hardships and was treated with much cruelty. She eventually died in Canada, after enduring many tortures by the French priests in their vain endeavors to convert her from the Puritan faith to the Roman Catholic religion."

The May 13, 1704 date is incorrect but is used in both sources. The correct date was February 29, 1704, a leap year not likely to be forgotten by the survivors.

Hertel de Rouville

Hertel de Rouville, who commanded the raiders was a bold, experienced and skillful French officer. In modern parlance, he believed in getting in fast, doing what you had to do, then getting out before they knew what hit them. His planning was good and the execution was 80% successful. The illustration shows Hertel in fancy duds; he was probably clad differently when he hit the winter trail.

Pascommuck (or Pascomuk) was the Indian name for Deerfield and was often used by the white settlers.

The Deerfield Massacre

Queen Anne's War - The Leap Year Massacre, continued

The date used in the two sources quoted is patently inaccurate as I have mentioned earlier. I am unable to find even a hint as to why it was used. Mrs. Avery, later in the same book, commenting on the death of Hester's younger brother Joseph on the same day, gave a date of February 29, 1704. The five other narratives I have read use the leap year date. Most of them mention the extreme cold and highly drifted snow. The weather could hardly have remained that harsh as late into spring as May 13, in any year in Massachusetts.

Whatever the date, there is no doubt that Benoni, Ebenezer, Jonathan and Joseph were killed and that Hester was taken prisoner. Her other brother Benjamin was either killed in this battle on this day or in subsequent fighting in 1704.

Other Versions

The following description of these events is the best one I have read, although it glosses over the grisliest details. It is from The French and Indian Wars by Edward P. Hamilton, published in 1962.

"The little village of Deerfield lies on the edge of the Connecticut valley and in 1704 it formed part of the western frontier of Massachusetts. It was fairly large and had 41 houses, fifteen of which were inside a stockade, too large for effective defense. There were about 300 people in the village late one night in February of that year, and the snow was deep over the surrounding fields. It had drifted up against the stockade in places, almost to its top, but no one worried for no enemy would be foolish enough to think of campaigning in the dead of winter.

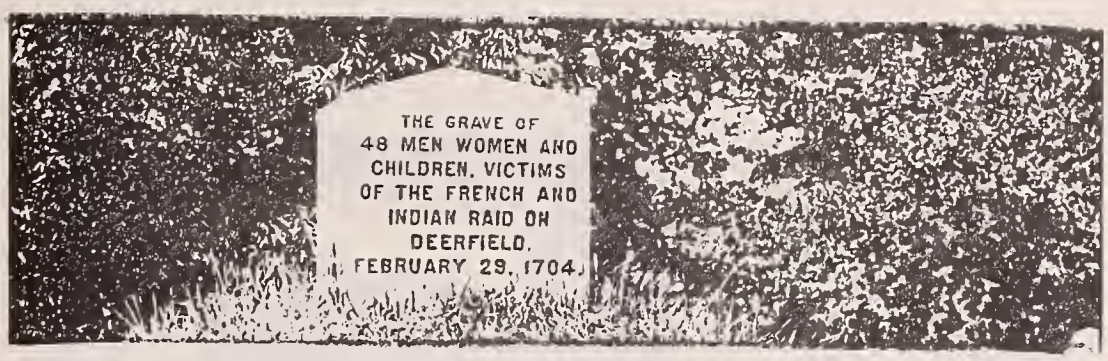
French and Indian allies attack

"Fifty Canadians and two hundred mission Indians nevertheless had braved the northern winter and had painfully made their way south on snowshoes. There was a firm crust on the snow and they left their packs and snowshoes some little distance away, and quietly approached the stockade just before dawn. They climbed it without difficulty thanks to the drifted snow, shouted the war-whoop and set to their horrid work. There is no need to detail the massacre, it was like many another. Some were lucky, got their doors and shutters battened down and held off the Indians, but others were not so fortunate and fell victim to the painted savages.

"The Canadians and Indians at last drew back, for the countryside began to threaten as angry Englishmen saw the light of the burning houses and turned out like buzzing hornets. Relief headed toward the stricken town, too late to punish the raiders but in time to speed their departure and cause them to leave behind a few more of their dead. When the count was finally taken, it was found that half a hundred English had been killed and more than twice as many dragged away as prisoners. Almost half of the houses had been burned. The raiders did not escape unscathed; about forty of their bodies were found in the village and its vicinity."

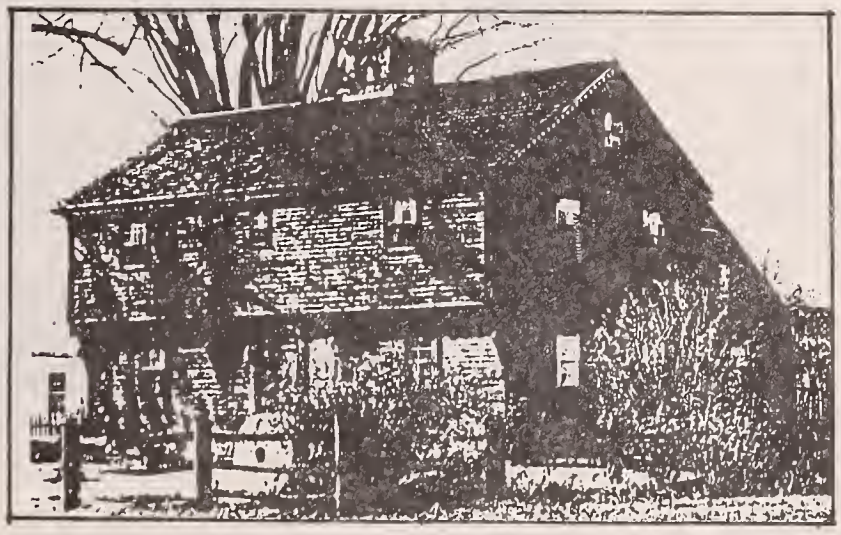
The Deerfield Massacre

Memorial To Those Killed



This stone marks the resting place of the men, women and children who were killed at Deerfield on February 29, 1704 by the French and Indians.

A House Well-defended



At the left, above, is a picture of Sheldon House, Deerfield, called Indian House because a few doughty frontier farmers barricaded themselves within it and defended it successfully from the French and Indian attack on February 29, 1704. It is a substantial looking place, with a big tree in the back yard.

The view on the right is an artist's later conception of the attack on the house. Certainly the building is recognizable, but who moved the big tree into the front yard? Where is the fence-deep snow? There is barely enough snow on the ground to leave foot-prints. None of the Abenaki Indians has a visible weapon except a tomahawk or a knife. Neither muskets nor bows and arrows are in sight. At this close range it would seem that the defenders would have dropped some of the attackers, but they all seem to be on their feet, unwounded and active.

In another graphic illustration not suitable for reproduction and not limited to the Sheldon House not one of the dozen Indians is brandishing a tomahawk or knife. They all have bows and arrows, some of which they are using to set roofs afire. One had a musket. One man with a sword is evidently a French soldier. No casualties can be seen.

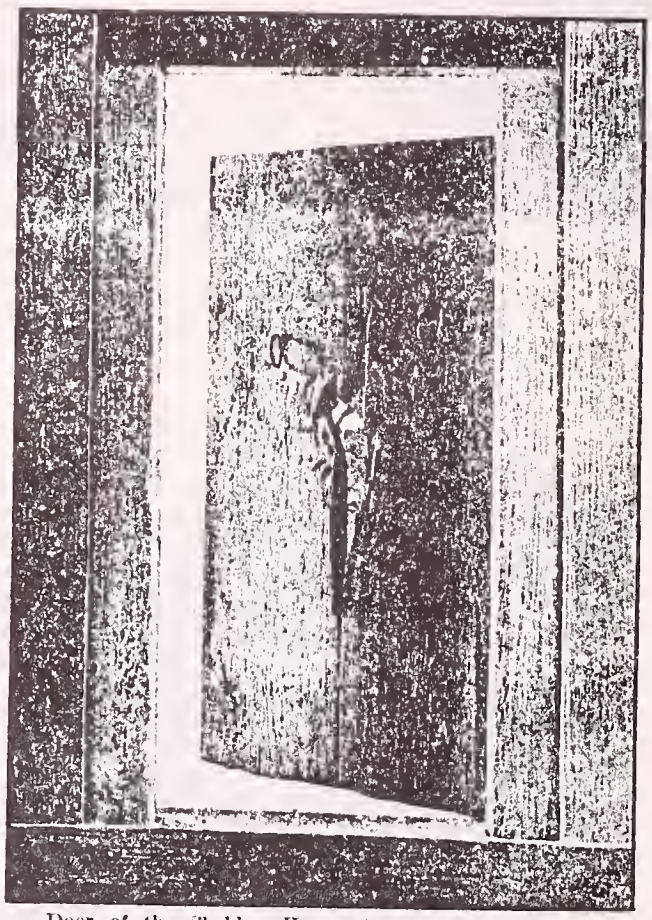
In Deerfield today, there is an Indian House, a reproduction of the Sheldon House built in 1698 which survived 1704. The original was torn down in the mid 1800's.

The Deerfield Massacre

A House Well Defended, continued

When the Indians attacked the Sheldon House in 1704 they chopped a hole in the front door with their tomahawks but failed to gain entry. Finally they gave up, probably mindful of de Rouville's orders to get in and get out quickly. They couldn't spend too much time on this one tough place. Better pickings elsewhere. The story goes that they left a hatchet in the hole and there are pictures of it that way. It's a nice little piece of business, but I wonder ------

That original heavy oak door, with hole but no tomahawk, is now on display in Memorial Hall, a museum in Deerfield. Many tourists have seen it, but not I.



Door of the Sheldon House, Deerfield, Mass., showing holes made by Indian hatchets.

Were The Prisoners Treated Cruelly?

When English troops and colonial New York militia carried the war to Canadian soil at La Prairie, Lachine and La Chesnaye, they had set an example for cruelty and wanton slaughter. The victorious French and Indians at Deerfield were mindful of this.

It is unlikely that raiders leaving Deerfield would treat their prisoners politely, but a live, healthy captive would bring a good price in Montreal, an unhealthy or handicapped one much less and one dead on the trail nothing at all. Denying the cruelty of the French or the Indians is foolish, but the evidence seems to indicate that they were not vicious just for fun. They could not afford to slow down the whole retreating group for the sake of a few stragglers; victor and victim were cold and hungry, with pursuers hot on their trail (or so they thought). Anyone who delayed, captor or captive, could have died of exposure. They had to keep moving. Thus their choices were clear and they made them.

This is a drawing made some time after the affair, showing male and female captives riding, unbound, while an Indian leads one horse. This does not fit any description of the trip that I read. Evidently the woman and a big-bottomed girl are riding double. Pipe the lady's hat. Just the right thing for a forest trail in winter.

Where is the snow? There is none on the trail. It is winter but the Indian is bare to the waist. The riders are much more comfortable than he is. Obviously illustrative journalism was not cluttered with facts, even then.

The Deerfield Massacre

Were The Prisoners Treated Cruelly?, continued.

The distance from Deerfield to Montreal is about 250 miles and I doubt that any captive rode any part of it. If the raiders came on snowshoes they must have worn them on the way home. The horses (if there actually were any) must have been liberated from Deerfield barns. You might argue that the male rider is a French or Canadian soldier, but I doubt that. He looks like a loser.

The stories about Hester claim she was tortured to induce her to embrace the Catholic faith. I suggest a grain or two of salt here. These tales were written while Puritanism was still the way of life in Massachusetts and bitter anti-Catholic propaganda was common. These were not priests of the Spanish Inquisition. Hester may well have been threatened with eternal damnation and I'm sure the clergymen were bigoted, but I seriously doubt that there was severe physical abuse.

Reverend John Williams was one of the captives taken at Deerfield. Two of his small children were killed and he, his wife and five other children became prisoners. Mrs. Williams, pregnant, died after a couple of days on the trail. Upon his return from Canada in 1706, Rev. Williams gave full and honest accounts of his experiences. He denounced some cruelties on the part of the Indians and praised some kindnesses too. He was well treated by the Governor in Montreal and by Jesuit priests who argued theology with him. He suffered no bodily harm or penetration of his own staunch Puritanism. He converted no Jesuits.

Return Of The Captives

The various authorities give different counts of the prisoners taken at Deerfield. The numbers range from 'about 100' to 100, 110, 119. Would it be fair to take a mid-point reading of 110? Of course it would. Let's.

If 110 were hustled out of Deerfield, 19 died or were killed enroute to Montreal since 91 arrived there. Some died in Canada, a few decided to stay, and 57 were returned to Boston on October 25, 1706. Reverend Williams' daughter was among those who decided to stay. He and his other surviving children returned.

A Final Word About Hester

When captives were given a choice of remaining in Canada or returning to Massachusetts, if Hester was still alive she must have elected to stay. Consider this. Here is a comparatively young woman of 38 who had lost one husband in an accident, then witnessed the grisly deaths of her second husband and her two small children. Perhaps she had heard of the deaths of her younger brothers. Then she was forced on a long, hard, cold, despairing trek of 250 miles. What was her state of mind? In my opinion, Hester had been so battered psychologically that she was a little left of lucid when she was manhandled out of Deerfield. What were incentives for survival? The terrific hardships of the trip north was too big an additional load and she may have succombed on the trail or shortly after reaching Montreal.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

The Deerfield Massacre

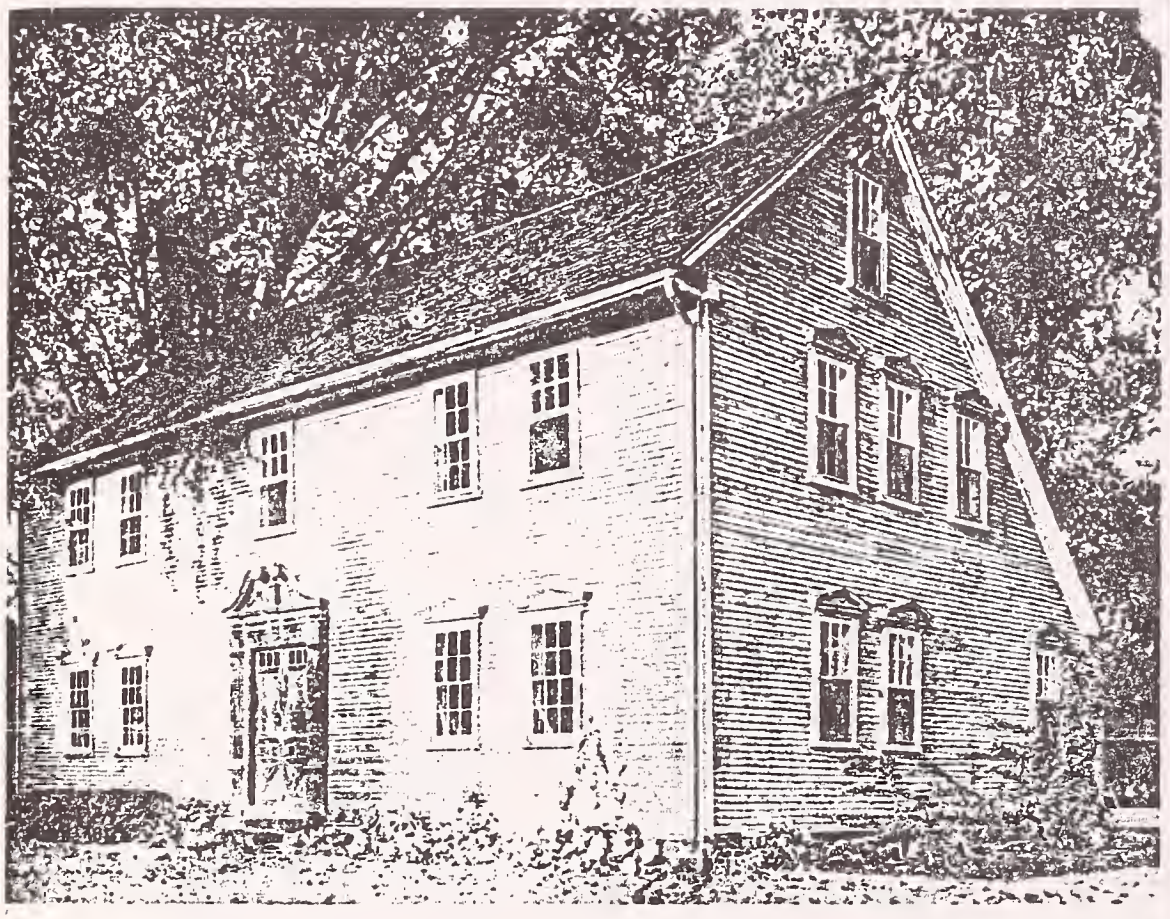
Postscript

Samuel Gurley, son of Hester Ingersoll Gurley and William Gurley was born in 1686. He had evidently left home before the Deerfield raid, settling first in Coventry, CT, and then in Mansfield. About 1712 he married Experience Rust. He died in Mansfield on February 23, 1760.

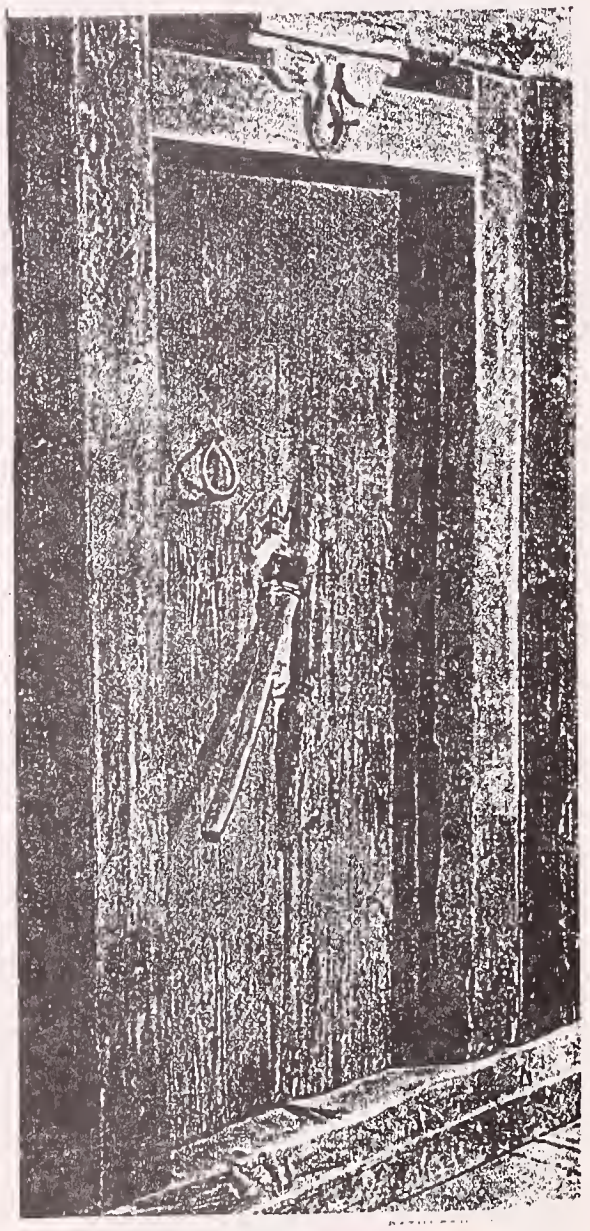
Samuel Gurley was the direct lineal ancestor of Nellis Marathon Rich, born January 1, 1858. Nellis, on April 7, 1891, married Anna Amelia (Ingersoll) Dimock (408 W - No Chart - 7th Generation)as her second husband, in Syracuse, New York. Anna Amelia was a descendant of Hester's half-brother Thomas (8 W - Chart J - 2nd Generation).

Anna Amelia and Nellis also had another common ancestor. Her grandmother Sarah Rich and Nellis's grandfather Van Rensselaer Rich were brother and sister.

Isn't that exciting? Can you hear the drums, fading, fading ----?



John Williams House: Williams was the first resident minister of Deerfield, who was captured by Indians and later released. The citizens of Deerfield voted in town meeting, in January 1706, to build a new house for him. This structure serves today as a dormitory for Deerfield Academy.



Do you believe this?

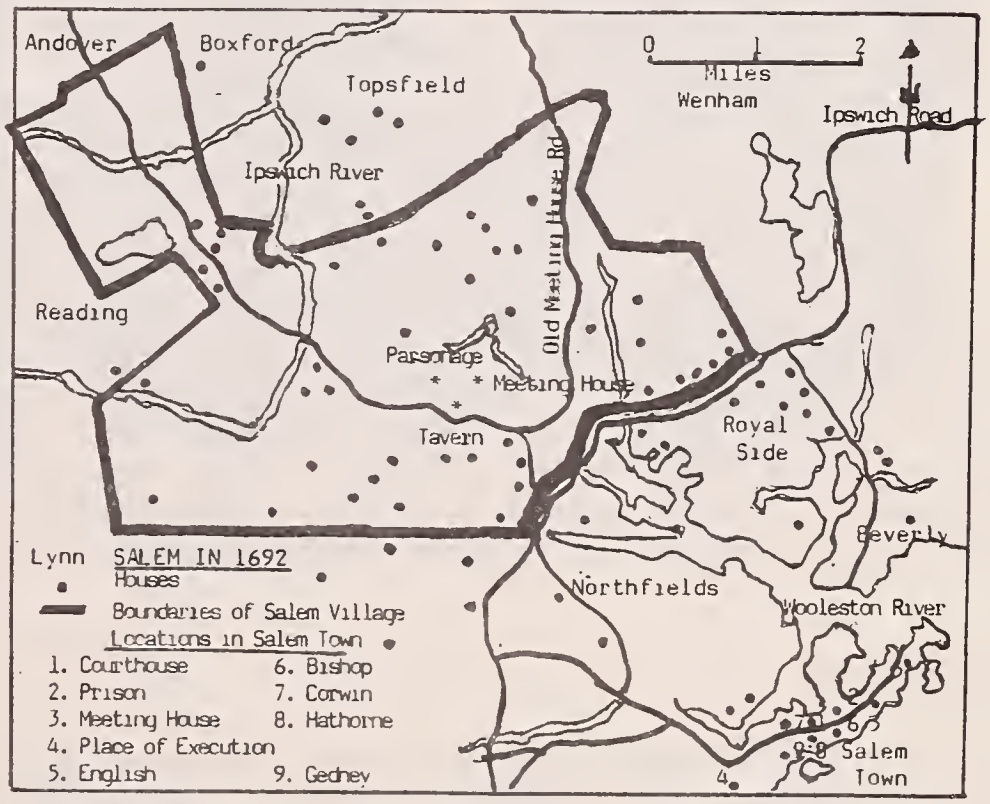
The Salem Witchcraft Trials

The Involvment of Ingersolls In This Madness

Nathaniel Ingersoll (7 S - No Chart - 2nd Generation), a son of the first Richard of Salem, was born there in 1632. At an early age he married Hannah Collins of Lynn. They had one child, Sarah (7i S), born about 1662. Nathaniel was a Lieutenant in the Militia and served in King Philip's War of 1675-76.

> "At his home, or mansion, as it is called, were held the parish and church meetings and he was allowed in 1673 to sell 'bear and syder' by the quart for the time whyle the farmers are building of their meeting house and on the Lord's day afterward."

Presumably it was known thenceforward as a tavern, Lord's day or no. Here is a map of Salem Village which was some distance from Salem Town, in what shortly afterwards became Danvers. The Tavern on the map was Nathaniel's place.



Nathaniel testified during the trials but he evidently retained the good-will of the community. (After all, who could throw the first stone?) He was a good citizen, donating land to the church and to the town for a "Training Ground Forever," which eventually became the village green. And there, in 1894, the citizens of Danvers set a huge boulder and dedicated it on June 30 of that year to the land donor with a suitable inscription and public ceremonies.

Earlier Witchcraft In New England

The Puritans brought with them to America an inborn fear of witches and their antics, which were as real to them as the facts of life. Rightly or wrongly this fear was based on Biblical interpretations. For generations in Europe, their parents and ancestors had been as sure that witches existed as they believed the sun would rise in the morning. They believed that witches were only extensions of the Devil as recited in scripture.

It is difficult now to determine why 17th century New Englanders (or anyone else), basically decent, reasonable and intelligent could believe so intensely in 'evil spirits' in people that they would kill to be rid of them. But they did, to their everlasting shame.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

The Salem Witchcraft Trials

Earlier Witchcraft in New England, continued

A YOUNG WITCH ABOUT TO BE PUT IN STOCKS

AN OLD WITCH BEING OSTRACIZED

Here are pictures demonstrating persecution of suspected witches, long before the hysteria in Salem in 1692. Such punishments were fairly common; anyone could start a witch-hunt by hinting that so-and-so was acting very oddly, like wearing her hat on backward or stuttering when she spoke. The targets were nearly always women. Some of them were old, maybe a little dotty from age and hardship, totally incapable of defending themselves, their words or actions. But many were young, handsome women, perhaps the victims of jealous rivals with faces and figures men found uninspiring. And all of them were perfectly innocent of any real crime; maybe they were a little "strange", but free of evil intent or action.

In the illustration at the left, the younger lady is to be placed in the stocks in a cold winter to be publicly exposed to indignity and insult, perhaps risking frostbite of her seat and hands and feet. Presumably she will be restored to good standing once she finished her stint. The old woman being thrown out of town, also in winter,is being shown her exile order, which she cannot read or barely see. No doubt she is expected to die soon of exposure with only her cane for protection and the meager contents of her basket (and her magic charms) to sustain her. What a rotten thing to do!

The Trials

300 years afterward, books are still being written about Salem and witchcraft, enlarging an already substantial literature. These 1692 trials were disgraceful exhibitions of ignorance, bigotry, superstition and mass hysteria. The whole thing was a tragic, stupid delusion fostered by the clergy, public officials and narrow-minded citizens, forcing their madness on every spectrum of society. It is difficult, today, to understand how anyone, let alone most of the population, could swallow all of this incredible guff, but they did, and they were willing to kill because of it.

Most of those involved in the prosecution and judgment of these trials later repudiated their actions, which was small comfort to the 5 men and 14 women who were hanged, or to 80-year-old Giles Corey who was deliberately crushed to death, or the hundred-odd people who lanquished in jail for several months.

At that time and place, a person could not be tried until he pleaded guilty or not guilty. Giles Corey refused to do either, evidently aware that, absent a plea, he could not be condemned. The court, however, could persuade him by stoning. This involved tying him prone on his cell floor and placing stones of progressively heavier weight upon him until he capitulated to the court or died.

The Salem Witchcraft Trials

The Trials, continued

Giles knew that, under the law, if he died under the court's treatment, unrelenting, he could not be tried and therefore could not be condemned. In that case, his property could not be confiscated by the court; his will remained valid and could be executed. So he had the last cackling laugh but he had to die, rather horribly, to get it.

Giles was a tough old bird and so was his his wife Martha. She gave jailors a bad time, voicing her opinions long and loud until a rope shut off her wind.

Rather than testify, Martha's husband, Giles, let himself be crushed to death with stones.

Outspoken Martha Corey was jailed and hanged for witchcraft. Even in prison she railed at the authorities.

Pre-trial Examinations

Some of the pre-trial examinations were conducted in the Salem home of Judge Jonathan Corwin. This place is still standing and is a stop on tourist tours of Old Salem. Built in 1642, it is currently designated "The Witch House" which seems odd since it was finally determined that there were no witches. But who would go to see it, if it were called "Judge Corwin's House?"

A colonial court was convened on March 1, 1692 in the tavern of Nathaniel Ingersoll. There had been so much advance rumor and gossip about alleged "possessions" that a crowd of morbid rubber-neckers showed up, so many gawkers with open mouths that the sorry proceedings were transferred to the meeting house. It's my guess that the meetings at Judge Corwin's came later.

The Salem Witchcraft Trials

Pre-trial Examinations, continued

It seems that Nathaniel's place was used to house suspects overnight when they were brought from out-of-town jails for trial or examination. After all this was the town's business and he could bill the town.

Some hearings were also conducted at Beadle's Tavern in Salem Town.

Evidently most of the actual trial proceedings were held in the Court House in Salem, which stood in what is now Washington Street.

The Judges

Governor Phips appointed William Stoughton, the Deputy Governor, a clergyman without legal background or experience, to be Chief Justice at the trials. John Hathorne (ancestor of Nathaniel Hawthorne) and Jonathan Corwin of Salem were designated Assistants, and they conducted many of the examinations.

William Stoughton

Nathaniel Saltonstall was also named an assistant, but he withdrew after the first trial began, evidently revolted by the proceedings. Five other assistants were Bartholmew Gedney of Salem, John Richards, Wait Winthrop, Peter Sargent and Samuel Sewell of Boston. Thomas Danforth, Samuel Appleton and Isaac Addington also presided over some of the hearings.

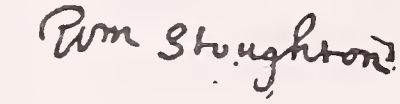
Of this whole lot, only Sewell publicly apologized for his participation, four years later.

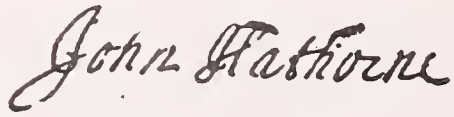
It is generally agreed that William Stoughton, by his lack of compassion and acceptance of "spectral evidence" was responsible to a large extent for the hysteria and human tragedy of the trials. His pictures reflects his 'holier than thou' attitude and his high opinion of Will Stoughton.

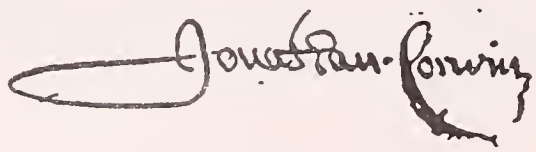
Samuel Sewell

The picture of Samuel Sewell, however, seems to indicate a much broader outlook and perhaps a hint of a sense of humor.

The signatures reproduced here are those of the judges who signed many of the relevant documents.







The Salem Witchcraft Trials

The Judges, continued

Increase and Cotton Mather did much in their literary efforts and their preaching to create an atmosphere of superstition and dread in New England prior to the trials, but afterward tried in a mealy-mouthed way to distance themselves from them and their taint.

The compiler has no intention of listing the things that these innocent but deluded people said they saw and did, or that they saw others doing, or that they heard others had done. These are too foolish for our august pages! Hah! There was a great mess of evidences of mass foolishness and complete lack of common sense. Two illustrations are provided below which suggest some of these inanities.

Through the power of prayer, a minister tries to deliver a young Puritan woman from her "affliction."

A key figure in trials, Tituba, the Reverend Parris' West Indian slave, told Salem girls' fortunes and was accused of teaching them sorcery.

The illustration at the left is an artist's conception of a 'bewitched' young girl throwing a self-induced hysterical fit. Her parents try to coax her out of it, while the Reverend on his knees prays for help. The other one depicts Tituba, a West Indian slave who probably started the whole fracas by relating lurid tales to teen-age or younger girls, frightening them out of their Bible-frightened wits.

The Salem Witchcraft Trials

Hear Ye! Hear Ye! All Rise!

103 *Trial of George Jacobs*, from the painting by T. H. Mattison (1868–), in the Essex Institute, Salem, Mass.

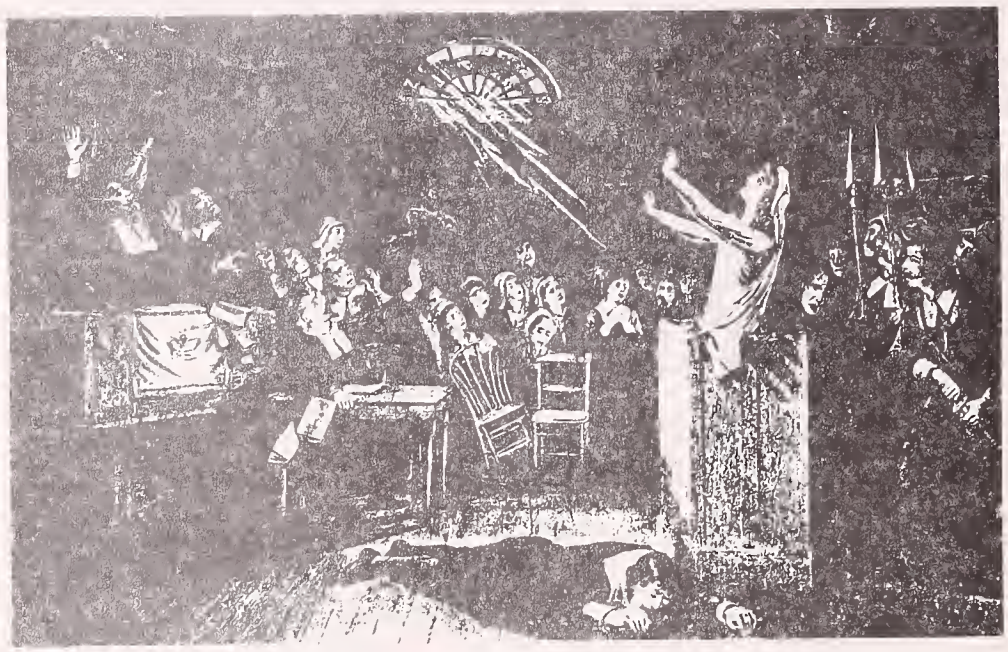
Pictures of events drawn from conceptions created from prose descriptions are likely to be as varied as there are people involved. We have several drawings of what someone thought the trials were like, demonstrating that variety.

The one at the left depicts a lot of finger-pointing and hands raised in protest or fear. Several women or girls have already swooned away, while others get ready to go into their act. Is that Bill Stoughton on the bench at the left, his sanctimonious jaw out-thrust? He needs a bailiff to keep order in his courtroom.

The vaulted, leaded windows in the background seem a little extravagant for the time and place.

In the second picture, a 'spectral demonstration" has illuminated the accused in the witness box, which is scaring everyone else. Obviously this gal has the power! The judge at the left, Stoughton maybe, is frightened out of his wits. On the floor a man lies face-down, unable to face it. At the far right a guy reached for his sword, ready to cut and slash. The clerk is so flustered he knocked all his papers onto the floor.

Here the fancy fan-window seems out of place, all alone across the wide background. And the artist can claim, justifiably, that he needed it for dramatic effect!



Puritan justice: Divine, or perhaps Satanic, intervention at a Salem trial.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

The Salem Witchcraft Trials

Hear Ye! Hear Ye! All Rise! Second Session

Howard Pyle's 19th-century engraving shows Salem ... trial with the accused praying and accusers in the first row howling and pointing. Horseshoe-pronged staffs are the artist's fanciful idea of antiwitch devices

This picture illustrates the trials as being somewhat more sedate, with fewer people and more dignity. Some suspects look to Heaven for help while at least one has given up in despair. That may be Stoughton at the table in the rear looking pretty stern.

The horse-shoe pronged staffs at the left, ridiculous to modern eyes, must have been thought to ward off evil spirits. They appear in the earlier picture of the old lady being thrown out of town in winter.

Nathaniel Ingersoll and his daughter Sarah testified against Elizabeth Proctor and Sarah Churchill respectively. Elizabeth, alas, was hung, but Sarah Churchill was spared. There is some indication that the Ingersolls both testified against other suspects. It is sad to relate that they were just as stupid as all the rest of Salem.

I think it was a foregone conclusion that a lot of people were going to be found guilty. If all the suspects held in jail awaiting trial had actually appeared before the bar the number executed would have been much greater. Thank goodness sanity prevailed in time.

This picture also portrays a dignified court room. Here all characters are composed except the girl throwing her private fit on the floor. Nobody seems to want to touch her. The judge seated at the left appears calm and reasonable. That maybe Stoughton at his left with his lean,mean and hungry look. The girl standing at the bar seems to be threatening the judge with heavenly retribution. The fine print caption here says that about 30 people were put to death, which is an exaggeration.

A witness declared she saw four ghosts at Ingersoll's house; still another claimed that a defendant followed him to Ingersoll's house, urging him to kill things she said she saw.

THE SALEM WITCH TRIALS: A GIRL BEWITCHED

The darkest blots on early New England history are the witchcraft killings in Salem of 1691 and 1692. In all about thirty people, mostly friendless old men and women, were put to death, one by the horrible method of crushing with heavy weights. The evidence which was presented in court by those who claimed they had been bewitched made a mockery of English justice. The craze finally collapsed as suddenly as it had started.

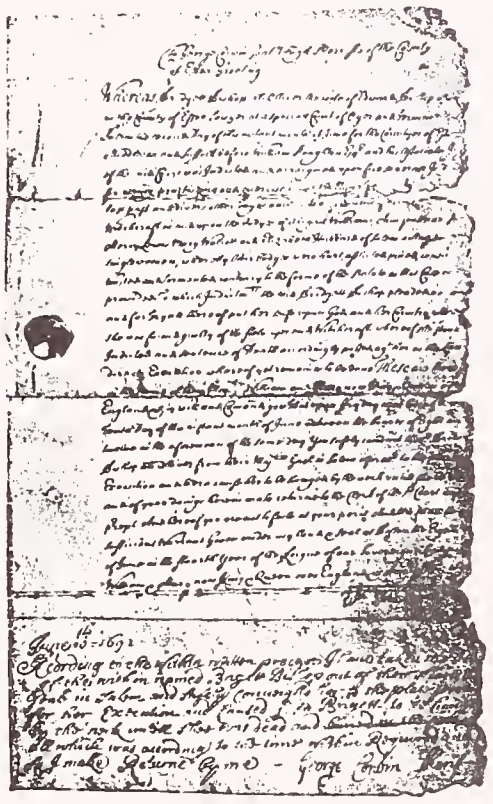
The Essential Wiswell Trivia

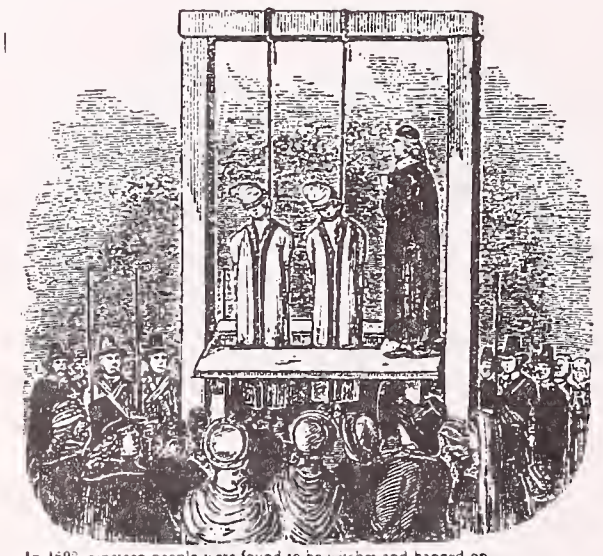
The Salem Witchcraft Trials

Tragic Consequences

These infamous trials proceeded throughout the summer of 1692. It wasn't until late in the Fall that the suddenly awakened conscience of the people cried, "Enough!" Those convicted were hung on June 10, July 19, August 19 and September 22.

Shown below is the death warrant issued to cover the execution of Bridget Bishop, the first victim. If you study it with a magnifying glass you will see that the warrant is signed by William Stoughton. The receipt portion is signed by George Corwin, a nephew of Judge Corwin. The other picture speaks for itself.





In 1692, nineteen people were found to be witches and hanged on "Gallows Hill." Four years later, a judge and 12 jurors publicly repented.

Miscellany

Several accounts of the trial mention Nathaniel's name and spell it Ingersol or Ingersoll, willy-nilly. The magistrate's order to the Marshall of Essex County to arrest a suspect, signed by Hathorne and Corwin, spells Nathaniel's name as Ingersalls.

John Alden, born 1663, grandson of John "Speak For Yourself" Alden of the Mayflower was accused of witchcraft and was imprisoned, but he escaped. He was the first cousin of Priscilla Pabodie (Peabody) born 1653, who married Ichabod Wiswell.

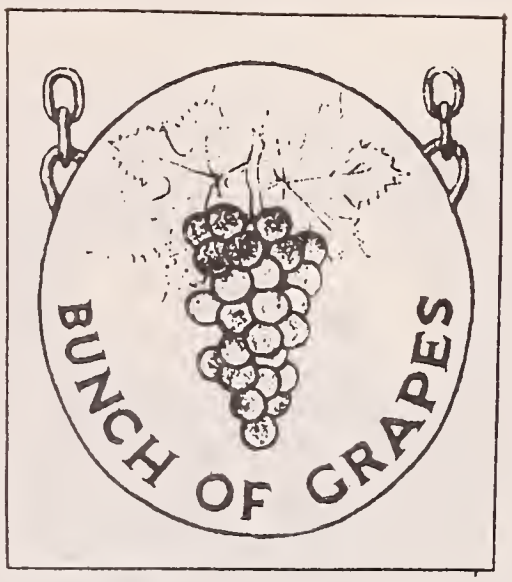
Judge John Hathorne, who never could erase the stain of his participation, involuntary or no, was the ancestor of Nathaniel Hawthorne and of Susannah Hathorne. Susannah married Samuel Ingersoll (147 S) and they had five children, including Susannah (147i S) born 1784, died 1858. There's more about the Hathornes and Ingersoll somewhere.

Ssh! Don't you ever tell a soul but one of my ancestors was burned as a witch in Europe a long time ago. I've been advised of that by a genealogist I respect.

Salem's dark hour:
Did the Devil
make them do it?

There Was A Tavern In The Town

The Bunch of Grapes



To modern readers The Bunch of Grapes is an unlikely name for a tavern, bar, inn or saloon, but was common for such places in 17th and 18th century Britain. When Englishmen crossed the Atlantic they brought with them the names of familiar cities, towns, villages - and grog-shops too. This name was obviously first associated with the serving of wine, but that distinction had been forgotten long since.

In references, "The" sometimes appears as a part of the name, sometimes not. I prefer The Bunch of Grapes, but some choose otherwise, as did the designer of the sign illustrated here.

There were several taverns, identically named, (give or take "The") in the Atlantic seaboard towns. John Adams (second President-to-be), in his journals, mentioned a pleasant evening, August 20, 1774, in Hull's, a tavern, sign of The Bunch of Grapes in New York City. During the occupation of Philadelphia by the British Army, many officers, including Major John Andre, entertained their guests at The Bunch of Grapes. Our interest here, however, is only that Boston Bunch operated for a time by Colonel Joseph Ingersoll.

Early Colonial Taverns

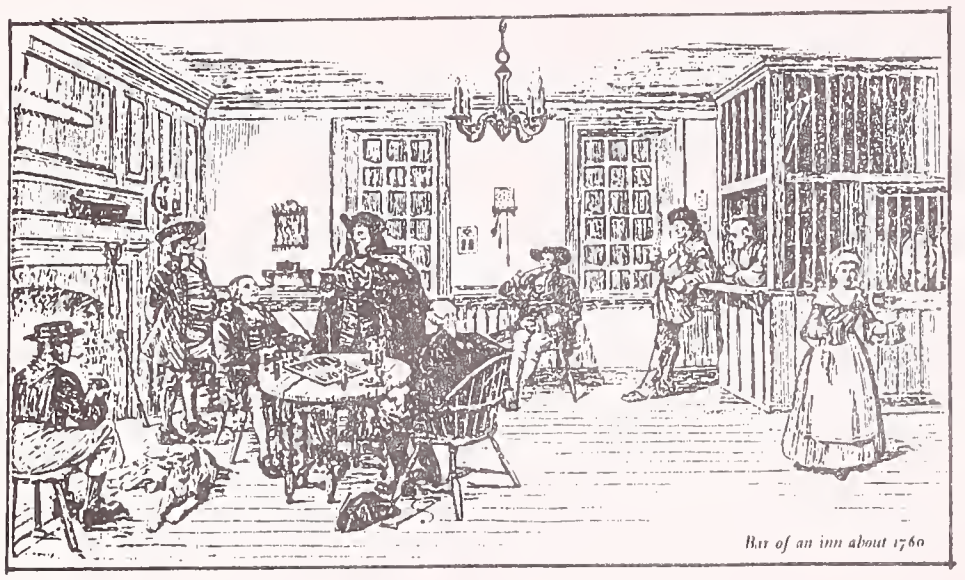
Early on, a tavern was often the first building at a junction of important roads or trails, on either river-bank of a bridge or ferry, or at any appropriate and pleasant spot. Sometimes they were little more than huts, where the host and his guests shared one or two rooms and a single fire. The inn-keeper offered plain food, strong drink, a dry place to sleep, rough horse shelter and fodder, all of it amidst a certain squalor, bug-ridden, redolent, sans hygiene, sanitation or even comfort. No matter the humble beginnings, these places were seeds and small settlements grew from them. And as these grew, so did the size, comfort, quality, cleanliness and price of accomodations offered.

In the 1700's New England taverns were licensed only to responsible and respectable citizens. They were inspected regularly and frequently under a rigorous system of fines for failure to meet standards. These first buildings were often used for religious services, local government functions, courts, jails, real estate auctions, lottery drawings, temporary schools, and public punishment of criminals or petty offenders was carried out in the yard. They might even be financed, supplied and patronized by pirates and smugglers. They were the centers of village social life.

In the larger towns, inns multiplied as did other buildings, but gradually they lost importance as churches, courts and sites of municipal government, as these functions found their own quarters. The inns then assumed their appointed roles and, in addition, became places for discussion of current affairs, gambling with cards or dice, griping about everything, and for broader cultural activities.

There Was A Tavern In The Town

Early Colonial Taverns, continued



This illustration depicts a higher-class inn, patronized at the moment by important men of the town, quietly talking over the day's news in the late afternoon, perhaps a bit drowsily. The backgammon players are about to go home for dinner. The frontiersman, leaning on the bar, talking to the bar-keep, is in town for a day or two, to collect wolf bounties, probably. The barmaid is scurrying toward another table, just off-scene to our right. Maybe they are better tippers.

Note the newly-arrived, portly gentleman warming his back-side at the fire. The large dog is obviously bored by it all.

Boston Taverns

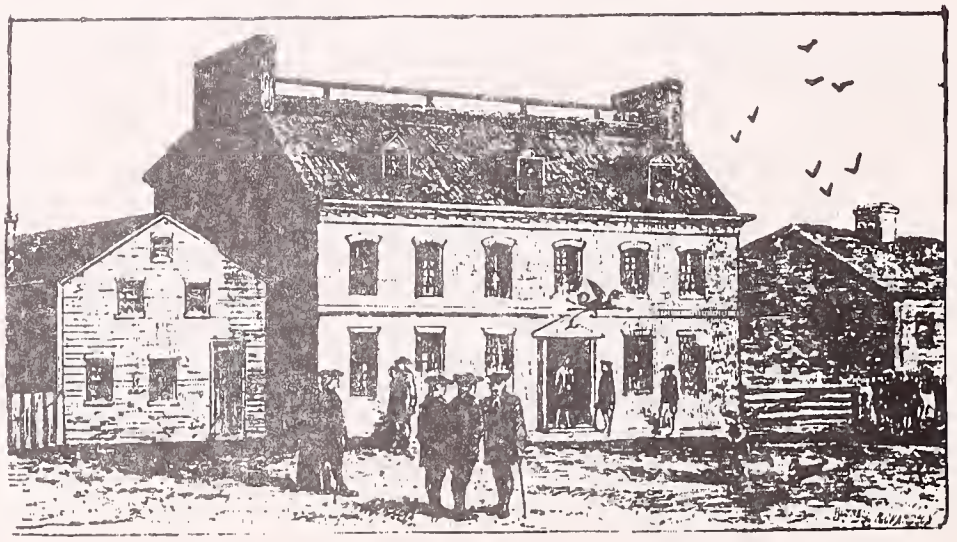
The first tavern in Boston was operated by one Samuel Cole in 1634. Nine years later licenses were issued to William Hudson, Jr., Goody Armitage and Mrs. William Knops, to open a "cook's shop" in the town. They were given the right to operate as an ordinary, but could not draw wine.

In the 17th century the better known Boston hostelries were The Bunch of Grapes, operated by William Hudson, Hugh Gunnison's King's Arms, George Monk's Blue Anchor, and the Castle Tavern in Dock Square whose host in 1687 was Daniel Wing. Much later, in 1735, the four-star places were The Bunch of Grapes, Green Dragon, Royal Exchange and Rose and Crown.

The first Masonic Lodge in Boston was organized at The Bunch of Grapes on July 30, 1733, by Henry Price, a tailor.

When British troops were quartered in Pre-Revolutionary Boston, they selected the inns they wished to patronize, the more elegant and expensive for the officers and civil authorities, the cheaper, less attractive ones for the enlisted men. As always.

Distrust of things British grew in the 1750-1775 period and the colonials tended to shun those places frequented by the officers and troops and to seek more convivial meeting places. For example, the Whig Club had always favored the Royal Coffee House, but in resentment of its new British officer customers, they transferred their allegiance to The Bunch of Grapes.



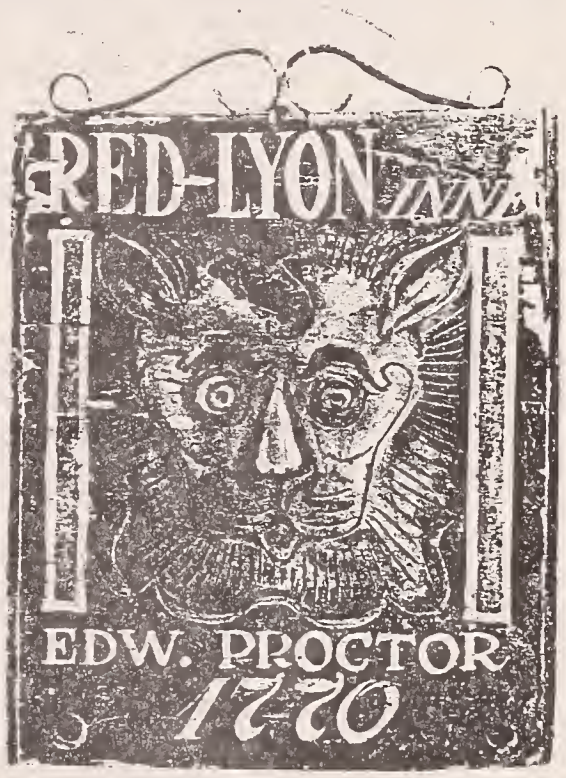
The Green Dragon Tavern, Boston, where Samuel Adams, John Hancock, and other New England patriots often met, and where the Boston Tea Party may have been planned.

There Was A Tavern In The Town

Boston Taverns, continued

Doctor Joseph Warren, Paul Revere and John Hancock were all members of St. Andrew's Masonic Lodge. In 1761, this lodge purchased The Green Dragon and operated it as their own. They tried to rechristen it The Freemasons' Arms but the older colorful name clung to the two-story building in North Boston and it survived. It was on the north corner of Union and Hanover Streets.

In 1770, one Edward Proctor, a friend of Paul Revere, opened a new public house which he called the Red Lyon Inne and identified it with this sign. Paul frequented this place as well as the older establishments. The mix of patrons may have been a little different, artisans, merchants, lawyers. Here talk eventually turned to rebellion, then independence. Since the Red Lyon Inne is seldom mentioned in the pre-revolutionary literature, we assume that it was a dignified place with little or no appeal to rabble-rousers or Sons of Liberty.



Patriotic Palaver

History books, volumes of historical comment, biographies which touch on the times of revolutionary fervor in all the colonies, all mention the role of taverns in the activities of the Sons of Liberty, of the patriot politicians and their clubs, of the Loyalist Organizations and of British officialdom.

I have neither the qualifications nor the desire to discuss all of this, pro and con, for which you can be grateful. It is evident, however, that the most often mentioned Boston tavern in which patriots' plans were made and plots were hatched was The Green Dragon. This was the meeting place of the brain-trust directing the Sons of Liberty. Strategy, threats, intimidation, vilification and judicious application of force were developed here. Years later Daniel Webster called it the "Headquarters of the Revolution."

The Bunch of Grapes is mentioned frequently; many of the active colonial patriots visited it, and other establishments, from time to time. It was a lively place in a lively time but its regular clientele was probably conservative or even stodgy in comparison with The Green Dragon rabble-rousers and bully-boys. These latter folk are discussed at some length in an earlier segment, Sons of Liberty.

An obscure illustrated history provides a picture labeled "Old Boston building where the tea plot was hatched." A fuzzy copy of that picture is reproduced here. If you'd care to study it with a magnifying glass, you would note that the left hand portion of the building has two signs, "Clothier" on the second floor, "Charles J. Lovejoy" on the first. This picture may have been taken long after a previous occupant had left it. We know for sure that it is not The Green Dragon which still exists. It's a little like country inns of today boasting that "Washington slept here," when he actually passed on the road one day, on the way to somewhere else to sleep. Everyone wants to get into the act.

There Was A Tavern In The Town

Joseph Ingersoll (57 S - Chart B - 5th Generation)

Joseph, the great-great-grandson of the original Richard of Salem, was born July 30, 1725 in Falmouth on Casco Bay. On September 24, 1749 he married Elizabeth Davenport of Boston. She was born March 8, 1723, the daughter of James Davenport, a baker and innkeeper who had 22 children.

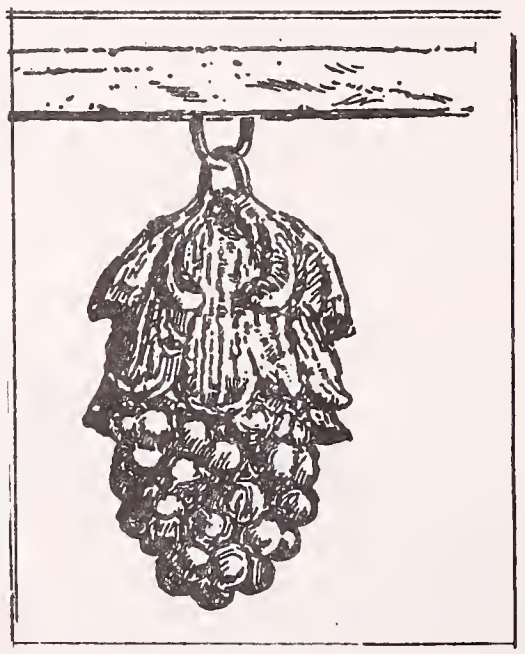
It is not clear now whether Davenport was in anyway connected with the ownership or operation of The Bunch of Grapes. It is possible that Joseph got into the tavern business through his wife. We know that Joseph served as a Lt. Colonel in the French and Indian War and that he was at Crown Point on June 22, 1759.

In 1764 and following "he was keeping The Bunch of Grapes tavern in Boston." This was the time of pre-Revolution turmoil and his premises were used by political clubs for planning steps to be taken against the acts of Parliament so distasteful to the colonials. A few sources indicate that the Boston Tea Party was planned in The Bunch of Grapes but more declare that The Green Dragon was the place at which the actual foray was devised. I think it likely that some of the instigators of the action talked some and drank some at Ingersoll's place, but that the hot and heavy decisions were made at The Green Dragon and that the fuse was lighted there.

Daniel Ingersoll (93 S - Chart A - 6th Generation)

Daniel Ingersoll, a great-great-great-grandson of the original Richard of Salem, was born April 21, 1750. He was said to have been a customer of his relative Joseph. Francis S. Drake's book "Tea Leaves" states: "Among the members of the Club who frequented the long room (of The Bunch of Grapes) where the destruction of the tea was planned, was Daniel Ingersoll."

At the time of the fracas in Boston Harbor, Daniel was 23 years old, just the right age for a militant Son of Liberty. We know that Daniel was a Mason of the St. Andrew's Lodge and that he would, normally, have done his imbibing and politicking and hell-raising at The Green Dragon, but there is no reason he could not have been at The Bunch of Grapes from time to time.



Daniel lived in Boston and was a carpenter. He later served as an officer in the Continental Army. After the Revolution he moved to Keene, N.H. He died there in 1829.

JOHN Wiswell

John Wiswell, a great-great-grandson of Elder Thomas Wiswell, might very well have attended meetings at The Bunch of Grapes and The Green Dragon but concrete evidence is lacking. He lived in Newton, not far away. He has been quoted as saying that he was a participant in the Boston Tea Party. There is more about him in the Wiswell secion of this book, wherever that is. You have probably forgotten it. Find it in the index, re-read it and be well informed.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

There Was A Tavern In The Town

What Happened to Joseph Ingersoll

We do not know the exact date of Joseph Ingersoll's death. He prepared his will February 2, 1789 and it was presented for probate March 15, 1790. It is manifest from other data that he managed the inn himself or by proxy until his death and that his widow operated it afterward. However, a visitor from England who stayed at The Bunch of Grapes in 1794 mentions a Colonel Coleman as his host there. We know that Elizabeth lived until 1809 so she must have sold out sometime after 1789.

Some Questions And Comment

Paul Revere fashioned a Memorial Punch Bowl to commemorate some anti-government action. This was placed in The Bunch of Grapes and its contents fortified many a patriot in the months ahead.

At one time handbells were rung in the Boston streets at 2:30 PM to announce that dinner was being served at The Bunch of Grapes.

General Rufus Putnam and his associates met in The Bunch of Grapes in 1786 to establish the Ohio Company which eventually acquired 1,500,000 acres of government land in Ohio.

General Washington and his staff were entertained at a lavish banquet at The Bunch of Grapes in 1776, to celebrate the withdrawal of the British from Boston.

President Washington, during his 1789 tour of New England, according to his journal, stayed "at Widow Ingersoll's (which is a very decent and good house)."

Bonus Commentary on Colonial Drinking

What of the drinking in taverns? Observers tell us it began heavy and stayed that way until the Temperance movement in the mid 1800's. Officials complained that people were congregating in the evenings and even on the Sabbath. They enacted ordinances to require landlords to allow a man to drink only half-an-hour at a time, not to serve him when he was drunk, not to serve Indians at all, and to close during church services and at official closing times. Nothing had any effect, even strict compliance on the part of the landlords, which might have been difficult. Whether it was custom, the daily tedium, weather extremes, whatever; all men drank, some heavily.

Quoting directly; "No man could run a grocery store without keeping a barrel on tap in the back room, where all customers could help themselves. At all trainings and musters, bridge-raisings and the like, the town furnished the rum. At all ordinations, installations, councils and other religious meetings, the church provided it. Ministers treated all who called upon them, and apologized for not having more and better stimulants. Church members and all others treated the minister when he called, and he often went home at night very boozy. The odor of rum was sure to be present at all town meetings, sheep-washings and shearings, huskings and log rollings. It was common at funerals, and the decanter and glasses were often placed on the head of the coffin as a token of the liberality of the mourners."

There Was A Tavern In The Town

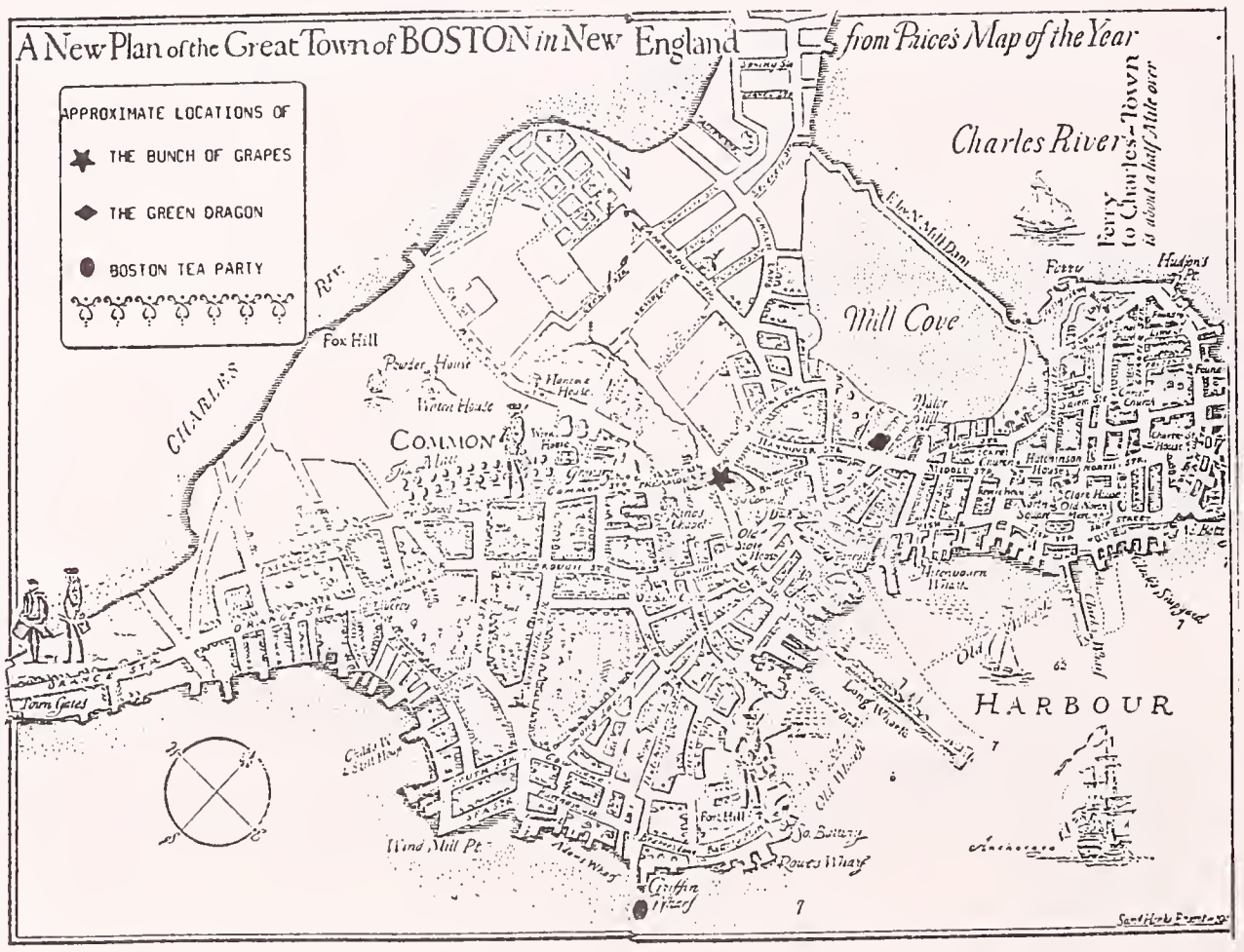
Bonus Commentary on Colonial Drinking, continued

Another quote: "... from all the districts of the town, on foot, a-horseback, in every variety of vehicle - some bringing butter and eggs or other domestic produce to exchange for a few groceries and a jug of New England rum; some coming empty-handed to kill time and soak themselves with toddy and flip. Especially in the long autumn and winter evenings would the sanded floors of the bar-rooms become the arena where a concourse of boon companions, in an atmosphere blue with tobacco smoke and profanity, wrangled about political questions, played practical jokes upon each other, told ribald stories, sang ribald songs and guzzled until stupid or half-crazed. About midnight, locked out by the landlord, these free men would reel to their half-starved, shivering steeds tied nearby, and ride howling home to the discomfort and misery there." Nothing changes. This reads like a good description, but let me add that the pungent aura from seldom laundered clothes and from infrequently bathed masculine bodies required the thick tobacco smoke in lieu of grooming aids.

Where Was The Bunch of Grapes?

I've asked myself that question many times, and I have yet to find a satisfactory answer. Some sources say in King Street, others say at the corner of Tremont and Court Streets. A recent guide books explains that a building at the corner of State and Kilby Streets was erected on the site of The Bunch of Grapes.

The map reproduced below places the fugitive inn within a few hundred feet of where the tavern must have been. It also shows the approximate locations of The Green Dragon and Griffin's Wharf, the site of the Boston Tea Party. None of these sites is guaranteed.



Judgment of Jared

The Writer's Dilemma

The reputation of Jared Ingersoll (16 W - Chart J - 3rd Generation) suffered from journalistic bias and opportunism, repeated historical inaccuracies, crude political chicanery and illegal duress. While the man certainly did not deserve deliberate calumny, admittedly he erred in judging others by his own ethical standards. This led him into stubborn failure to recognize and accept reality, no matter how repugnant it might be. He resisted any change that smacked of disloyalty to principle.

I would like to describe Jared's misadventures succinctly and completely, but one precludes the other. The sources I consulted were either complete and lengthy or brief and sketchy. And they were describing only Jared, the scapegoat, the victim of vicious political revenge, rather than Jared, the proud, stubborn, righteous man. My task is easier; I'll try to outline:

The long-term development of bitter political opposition to the existing establishment in Connecticut.

Jared's non-political life at the time of the Stamp Act.

The events of 1765 affecting Jared.

Jared's subsequent life.

A State Divided

Politically, pre-Revolutionary Connecticut was sharply divided into an Eastern (Liberal) area and a Western (Conservative) sector. For decades prior to the Stamp Act, these factions were diametrically and very bitterly opposed on at least three major issues, the Eastern bloc in favor, the Western against:

Issuance of paper currency.

Susquehanna Company sponsoring and financing the exploitation of flawed claims to portions of Pennsylvania.

Relaxation of traditional, strict Congregational Church practices.

In the colony's General Assembly, the West prevailed on all three of these issues, to the consternation and frustration of the East. The leaders of the losing bloc were angry, hungry for victory, avid for revenge. Many of the Eastern people had carried Jared high on their hit lists since his under-graduate days at Yale. The prominence he had since attained only increased their determination to bring him down, to discredit him and impugn his reputation.

Early Jared

Jared Ingersoll, a grandson of the original John Ingersoll of Westfield, was born in Milford, Conn. on June 3, 1722. His parents were Jonathan Ingersoll (10 W - Chart J - 2nd Generation) and Sarah (Newton) Miles Ingersoll.

Judgment of Jared

Early Jared, continued

Jared was an exceptionally bright young man who graduated from Yale in 1742 and read law in New Haven. On August 1, 1743, he married Hannah Whiting, of a prominent New Haven family. They had four children, three of whom died in infancy or childhood. Only Jared, Jr. (39 W - Chart J - 4th Generation) survived. After Hannah's death, Jared married Hannah Miles Alling, the widow of Enos Alling, in 1780.

He practiced law in New Haven with marked success. When Ethan Allen asked the Governor of New Hampshire to recommend a lawyer to handle his case against New York regarding the Hampshire Grants, the Governor suggested Jared as the "best attorney in New England." Jared's skill was unavailing in this case, however. The New York judge refused to hear either Ethan or Jared and threw the case out of court.

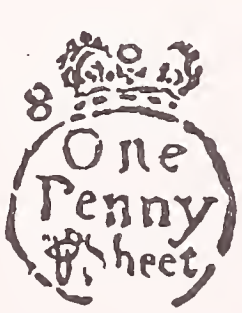
Another source stated, "Certainly, few patriots were the peers of Jared Ingersoll in the law ...."

Benedict Arnold, then a thriving business man in New Haven, and Jared were friends although they did not see eye-to-eye politically. Jared was staunchly 'with' the law. Arnold felt that it might be stretched here and there, now and then, give or take.

Early Stamp Act Involvment

Jared's early commitment to conservative policies earned him a 1758 appointment by the establishment as English Agent for Connecticut and he spent the next three years in England working for the interests of the Colony. When his term expired and he returned to New Haven in 1761 he found that he had missed much of the Colony's turmoil and that his enemies had made great strides in his absence.

He visited London again on personal business in 1764, and while there he was reappointed Agent for Connecticut. Along with Agents for other Colonies, he tried to dissuade Thomas Whately, the British Treasury Secretary, from pushing the Stamp Act in Parliament. When it became obvious that there was going to be a Stamp Act, come what may, he and the others did succeed in softening some of its provisions and postponing the effective date until November 15, 1765. His efforts in the Colony's behalf, however, were obscured or offset or discounted by his acceptance, on the advice of Benjamin Franklin, of an appointment as Stamp Act Agent for Connecticut.



This is what caused all the fuss!

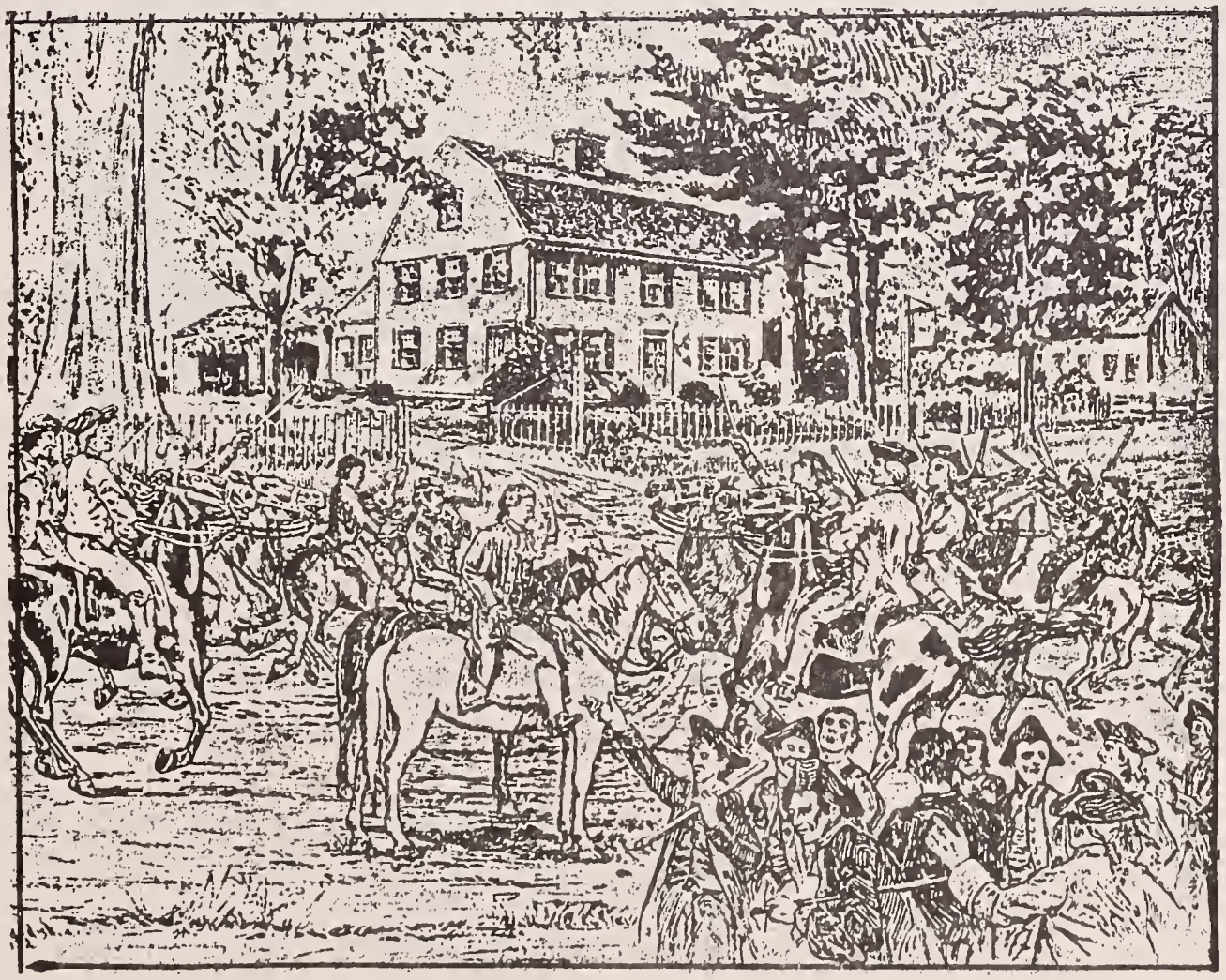
Judgment of Jared

Early Stamp Act Involvment, continued

When Jared returned from England he was met with vituperation, threats, scurrilous newspaper publicity. He had hoped for understanding that he was trying to do the best he could, that his administration of the stamps would at least assure the people of honest dealings. But he was out of touch with popular sentiment; he did not realize that, come hell or high water, the colonials were not going to stand for it. His explanations fell on deaf ears. As far as the hoi polloi were concerned, his £300 per annum salary as Stamp Agent was the topper, and his enemies made the most ot it.

Confrontation

News that he had been hung and burned in effigy in several Connecticut towns convinced Jared that there was more here than noise and bombast. Early in September a demonstration in New Haven resulted in a mob threatening to burn down his West Haven home if he didn't resign. He harangued the crowd, explaining that he could not resign until the General Assembly could determine the will of the Colony. This got the mob off his back that night, but the sentiment of the people, incited by Sons of Liberty (almost certainly including Benedict Arnold), grew steadily more and more aggressive.



On September 19, 1765 Jared set out for Hartford on horseback. As he rode small groups of men joined him, most of them carrying peeled willow batons or barrel staves, shouting demands for his resignation as Stamp Agent.

When he reached Wethersfield his escort had become a force of 500 men. He sought refuge in a private home, but the mob refused to be diverted from its stated purpose.

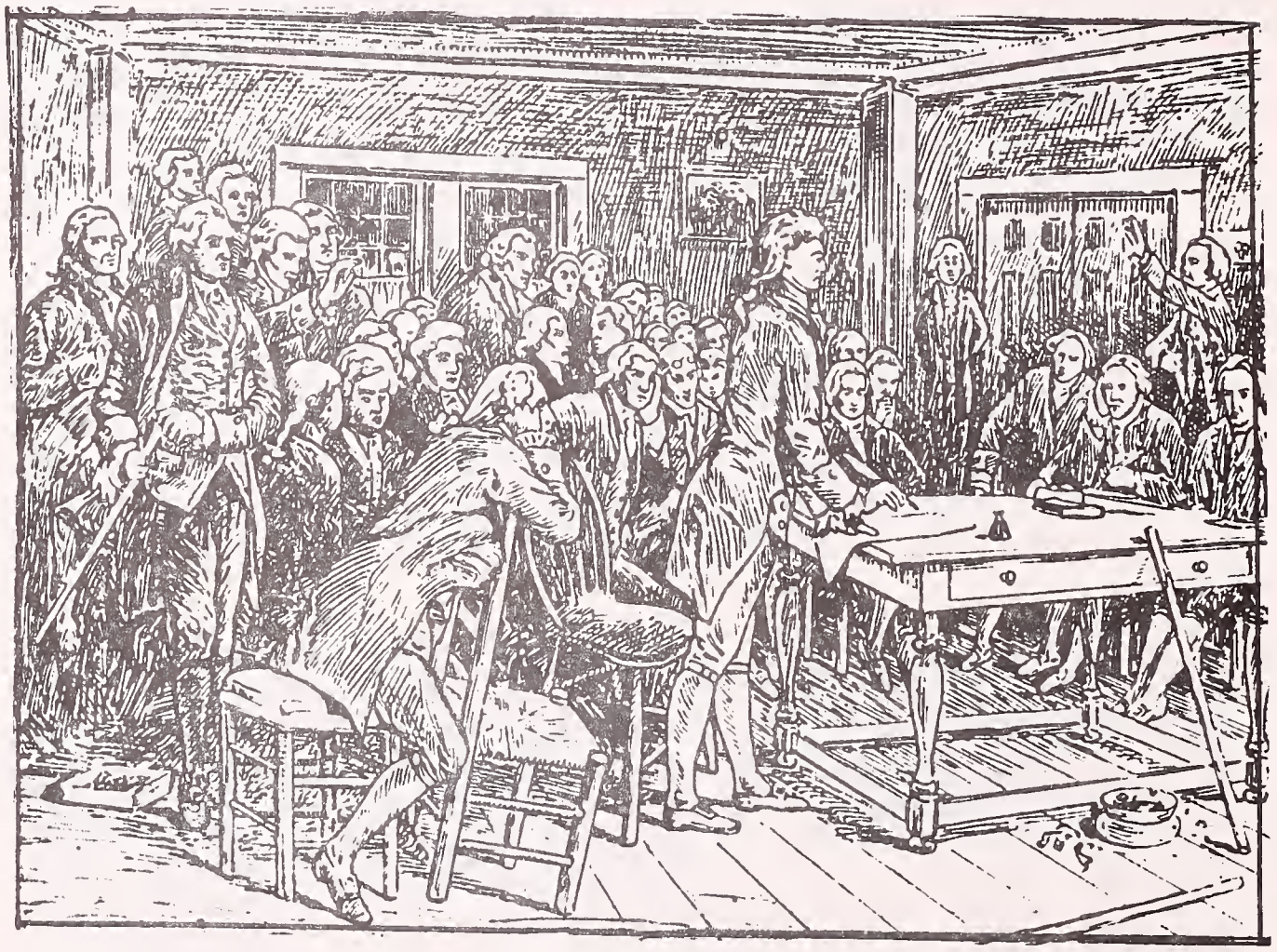
He delayed and tried to negotiate, but these men were not his New Haven neighbors. The arguments that had worked before cut no ice here. These people wanted action and were prepared to do whatever was necessary to get it.

Jared approached the leader of the mob, Major John Durkee, and asked on what authority these men were demanding his resignation. Durkee simply pointed to the assembled men, and said, "This is our authority. We mean to have your resignation."

Judgment of Jared

Confrontation, continued

Jared had sense enough to see that the mob was in no mood for more delay. It stuck in his craw but he wrote out his resignation and signed it. The wording was found to be a little ambiguous, so the Sons of Liberty scribes drew up a stronger version, which Jared signed.



During these proceedings, the mob may not always have been polite, but at no time was Jared maligned or harmed. I'm sure, however, that he gagged a little at the wording of the revision.

After the signing Jared shared a dinner with Durkee and others.

A point of interest - another of the mob's leaders was one Zebulon Butler. He and Major Durkee appear later in these chronicle - in vastly different circumstances. As far as I can determine Benedict Arnold was not among those who escorted Jared to Wethersfield, probably only because he was out of colony or even out of country.

Jared Afterward

Jared continued to practice law in New Haven, with success. He still had his sharp legal mind, even if he did have to relinquish the Stamp Act job. The Act never did go into effect. Parliament, finally waking up to the fact that they had a tiger by the tail, cancelled it soon afterward.

In 1770 Jared was appointed by London as Judge of the Vice-Admiralty in Philadelphia. He moved to Pennsylvania and served in that capacity until 1777. At that time, with the British Army approaching Philadelphia, loyalist-hunting patriots insisted that he get out, on parole. Once again, then, he was back in New Haven. He died there on August 25, 1781 and is buried in the crypt of Center Church.

Judgment

Jared Ingersoll was a good man, some historians to the contrary. These snide chroniclers sometimes confuse him with his son, even as to what he said and did.

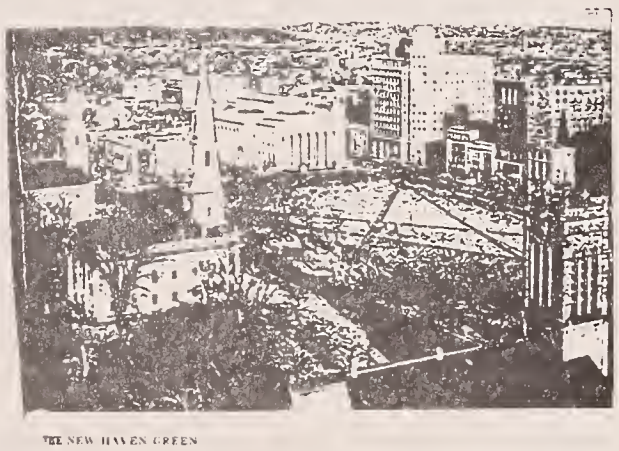
Judgment of Jared

Judgment, continued

The worst offenders are those who assert that he helped draft the Constitution of the United States. When that was done he was eight years dead. His son did it. A wrong historian is a dumb one. An encycopedia has his son lying in his grave. Geeesst!

Jared was unlucky. he was caught between a rock and a hard place, but he stood like a man and took his lumps. He never apologized or thought he should. Hurrah for Jared!

Center Church, New Haven
Where Jared Is Buried



New Haven Green, Showing
Center Church at left

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

A Few Ingersoll Non-Conformists

Revolutionary Attitudes

In 1775 the colonial population in America was roughly one-third Whigs and their adherents, one third Loyalists or Tories and one-third undecided and malleable.

The eventually victorious Whigs, loudly advocating peaceful and lawful change, nevertheless fostered the Sons of Liberty and condoned their use of force, violence, threats and brutality to attain their ends. This party ostensibly supported the 'have nots' but there were many among them who were selfishly motivated 'haves.'

The Tories who went down with the British government included Crown-appointed officials, the socially elite, prosperous merchants, shipowners and landowners, all 'haves.' Their failure, early on, to create a militant faction contributed to ther defeat. Believers in the status-quo, their minds were closed to the new concept of a democratic and powerful commonalty. They suffered, too, from the ineptitudes and failures of the British establishment.

The persons in the last third were unable or unwilling to decide one way or the other but were ready to get off the fence and move in either direction as the fortunes of war swung back and forth. When it was over, the lucky ones had become staunch Whig supporters, while the others jumped the wrong way too late, and suffered with the defeated Tories.

After reading much confusing, some contradictory and often slanted commentary, I believe that there were honest, decent, thoughtful people on all sides. I also believe that there were connivers, frauds, bigots and scoundrels among them. There were cries for Freedom and cries for the King, but self-interest was the principal determinant of position.

What I have read of the Ingersolls in those times leads me to think that most of them were Rebels in the true sense and supported independence from Britain, even if some of them may have deplored the means of achieving it.

A Few Examples

Jared Ingersoll (16 W - Chart J - 4th Generation) will never be mentioned in American history books as anything but a Loyalist, although he was a brilliant lawyer, a just, honest and upright man. His misfortunes are described somewhere in this archive.

David Ingersoll (28 W - Chart J - 4th Generation) was born in Great Barrington, Mass. on September 26, 1742. A Yale graduate, he attained prominence as a lawyer. During the pre-Revolutionary troubles, he adhered to the British cause and supported Governor Hutchinson. In August 1774 he was seized by Litchfield Sons of Liberty and imprisoned. He was eventually paroled and then mortgaged his homestead to obtain funds to leave the country. In the fall of that year he sailed to London and never returned. The General Court declared him proscribed and banished in 1778. In England he married Frances Rebecca Riley in 1783. They had two sons. David died there, in 1796.

Deodat Ingersoll (29 W - Chart J - 4th Generation) was born April 18, 1744, in Great Barrington, brother of David, just above. In 1777 he was reported to be disloyal, but later was in good standing in Alford, Massachusetts.

A Few Ingersoll Non-Conformists

John Ingersoll (21 W - Chart J - 4th Generation) was born February 26, 1731 and died March 1, 1792. He was commissioned by George III as Chief Magistrate of Westfield, Massachusetts.

John's sympathies were with the Rebels, but he could not conscientiously violate his oath of office. He tried to follow a neutral course, but found that the Sons of Liberty did not recognize neutrality. You were or you weren't, whichever. There was no middleground. Denounced as a Tory, he was arrested by the Committee of Safety. No material evidence could be produced against him at his trial and he was sentenced to house arrest. After the war, John was reinstated in the good graces of his fellow citizens and was a delegate to the Massachusetts Constitutional Convention. In 1775 John was a wealthy man but was impoverished at the end of the war.

Comments Regarding the Whig-Tory Conflict

Here are some interesting things I read which I would like to share. Listen up!

In 1750 everyone was a Loyalist. Loyalty was the normal condition, the state that had existed and did exist. It became unfashionable.

Mobs are the first-born offspring of oppression, real or imagined. When Sons of Liberty mob leaders were asked on what authority they acted, they pointed to the mob, its membership brandishing clubs, shaking fists, swearing threats.

After Lexington even a suspected Tory was regarded as an enemy and the person of a Tory was as intolerable as his opinion. If any Tory evaded the wrath of Sons of Liberty, his friends might be harassed, without regard for their sentiments.

Influential Tories at first disdained controversy with noisy, blustering,bellicose patriots but were forced to it eventually, willy-nilly, usually to their loss.

A Tory expressed his contempt for his adversaries thus: "If I must be enslaved, let it be by a King at least and not a parcel of upstart, lawless committee men. If I must be devoured let me be devoured by the jaws of a lion and not be gnawed to death by rats and vermin." A brave, proud man, but a fool-hardy one. I don't know who he was or what happened to him, but I'll bet he got his lumps.

When Continental paper money was issued by Congress, the Tories actively engaged in printing and circulating counterfeit scrip.

Parliamentary Law a la Whigs - when only two memebers showed up at a scheduled meeting, one appointed the other a delegate to Congress. Whoever attended made up a quorum.

The banishment or death of over 100,000 of the most conservative and respectable Americans is a tragedy rarely paralleled in the history of the world.

When France entered the war, Tories exploited the anti-Catholic prejudices of most of the colonists by declaring that fleets of priests were on the way to America with tons of holy water and consecrated oil for use in the conversion of all citizens. The number of morons who believed this fairy tale is not recorded.

A Few Ingersoll Non-Conformists

Uninvited Comments of the Compiler

No one asked me, but, in my opinion the Whigs (Patriots) allowed a police state to be created and to prevail and knowingly closed their eyes to its evils and inequities. History and posterity have closed their eyes tightly on the hypocrisy of the Whigs and their compliant tool - the Sons of Liberty.

In Massachusetts, in the 1770's, if a member of the Council or House, a selectman, a military or civil officer, or a member of a committee of correspondence suspected any citizen, he reported the 'suspect' to the justice of the peace. The latter summoned the proscribed man and gave him two hours to decide whether or not he would sign an oath to aid the American cause and fight the British. If he refused, he went to jail. All fees and costs of maintenance in jail came out of the pocket of the non-swearing prisoner. Eventually he either conformed or was deported and his assets were confiscated.

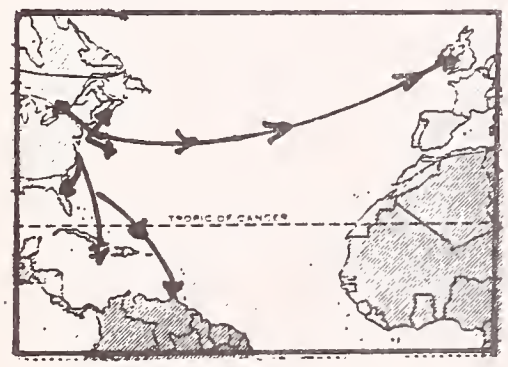
Can you believe this? Tories who failed to sign away their loyalty to England were hanged, whipped, branded, tarred and feathered, ear-cropped, ridden on rails and exposed in pillories. Estates of some who fled were taxed at treble the regular rate. In some Southern states, Tories were obliged to make good all robberies within the county, no matter who the robber or victim. Property of Tories who were elsewhere seeking bodily safety were raffled off or auctioned off, horses, cows, poultry, pigs, crops - without a by-your-leave. Imagine the lush opportunities for corruption and believe me, those opportunities were diligently exploited. And all this was by the ones we call the good guys!

Believe it!

Admittedly things were worse in some colonies than in others. But even when the non-conformers were treated with some compassion and decency, they were still considered to be third-class citizens, at best.

The writings of some high thinking Whigs, brought to light much later, indicate that there were people who deplored the treatment meted out to those who disagreed with the way things were. Our history has been developed by presenting only the pleasant and honorable aspects of these turbulent times. Generally Americans today seem to think the ends justify the means. Most people don't even want to think about it.

Repatriation



Tory families to the number of 100,000 people left the colonies voluntarily or were deported during and after the Revolutionary hostilities. About half of them went to Canada (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Ontario), others to Bermuda, Bahamas, St. Augustine (then under British control), Barbados, other West Indies and England itself.

A Few Ingersoll Non-Conformists

Reflect On This

In Hitler's Germany, the non-conformists, and all Jews, stripped of their possessions (even gold fillings from their teeth) were delivered to the concentration camps. There they worked their butts off, or were used for some pretty grisly experiments and ended up as fuel for the heating system.

In Czarist Russia the prisoners made the 1000 mile trip on foot to the eternal frozen silence of Siberia. During the Stalin era they were transported half-way by cattle cars and only had to walk the remaining 500 miles to disappear into oblivion.

In Revolutionary France, the recalcitrant prisoner loyal to his patrimony was treated to a stand-up ride in a tumbril all the way to the swishing drop, thud and spurt of the guillotine.

Who can point fingers or throw stones?

Jonathan Ingersoll, His Daughters-in-Law and Shay's Rebellion

Jonathan Ingersoll (18 W - Chart J - 4th Generation)

Jonathan, a great-grandson of the original John Ingersoll of Westfield, was born January 15, 1715 in Westfield. He married Eunice Moseley on November 15, 1738.

Jonathan was a captain of the "Hampshire Regiment" of militia which took part in the expedition against Crown Point in 1755 under the command of William Johnson. Alas, he was killed in the September 8, 1755 engagement with the French and Indians under Baron Dieskau.

William Johnson

The inscription on his tombstone in the old cemetery in Westfield reads:

> Capt. Jona. Ingersoll, who, being in the service of his country, was killed at Lake George, September 8, 1775, in the 41st year of his age.

Jonathan and Eunice had 8 children, of whom five lived to maturity.

Oliver Ingersoll (40 W - Chart J - 5th Generation)

Oliver, a son of Jonathan and Eunice, was born March 19, 1740 in Westfield, where he died March 24, 1789. He married Abigail Marshall in 1761. He is listed here only because of the odd inscription on the tombstone of his wife; she evidently died in a strange way. I mean no disrespect to her, but I felt that the unique wording is worth repeating.

> Mrs. Abigail Ingersoll, who in the absence of the family of a fit fell into the fire and expired 19 February, 1809, age 64.

Military Interlude

I feel that most readers will be a little vague in their recollections of the circumstances and particulars of Shay's Rebellion of 1786-87 in Massachusetts. Since some Ingersolls were directly involved, I'd like to recite a few salient points, thus to help you recall the entire story, with which, I'm sure, you were once very familiar.

The rebels occupy a courthouse.

In the post-Revolutionary years, farmers in western Massachusetts were hard pressed to pay taxes and meet their debts, and the insistence of the Boston merchant and financial moguls on payment in specie (hard cash you could bite - no paper) made it almost impossible for them to pay. This led to wide-spread court-ordered sales of farms to pay debts or delinquint taxes. Since the dispossessed farmers lost their voting franchise when they lost their property, they could not vote to force the Legislature to correct the situation. Many of these afflicted farmers were fed up to the teeth with this Catch-22 fix. In strength they forced the Northampton Court to close, thus preventing more distress sales. Governor James Baldwin, a puppet of the Boston politicians seeking to save their gold mine, sent militia to Springfield to protect the court there.

Jonathan Ingersoll, His Daughters-in-Law and Shay's Rebellion

Military Interlude, Continued

The rebels, led by Daniel Shay, out-bluffed and overawed the militia and succeeded in closing that court too. Shay raised 1200 embittered men in Worcester and marched again to Springfield, this time intending to seize the federal arsenal there. The militia

Outside the arsenal at Springfield.

Here the militia is firing at the rebellious farmers.

at Springfield, now led by General Benjamin Lincoln who had put some starch in their spines, let the rebels know that messing with the government's weapons was going a little too far. Some shots were fired, the rebels fled. Lincoln chased them 30 miles to Petersham, where they were broken up and dispersed. Many were imprisoned.

In the following spring, a new legislature came to its senses, reduced taxes and provided relief for debtors. Governor Baldwin was swept out of office. The new Governor, John Hancock, hurrah, eventually pardoned Shay and the insurgents.

This brief furor emphasized the need for strong central government, a constitution with teeth and a capability of maintaining law and order.

The illustration at the right points out the divergent views of the citizens. It was a case of have or have not, the ins and the outs, the stupid (them) and the smart (us).

As it comes down to us, justice prevailed at last. Hip! Hip!

A state divided: Fight between a Shays rebel and a government supporter.

Jonathan Ingersoll, His Daughters-in-Law and Shay's Rebellion

Jared Ingersoll (41 W - Chart J - 5th Generation)

Jared, a son of Jonathan, was born October 20, 1745 at Westfield, Mass. and died February 2, 1835 at Pittsfield. On April 27, 1782 he married Mrs. Huldah (Kilburn) Brown, who was born in 1750 and died in 1834.

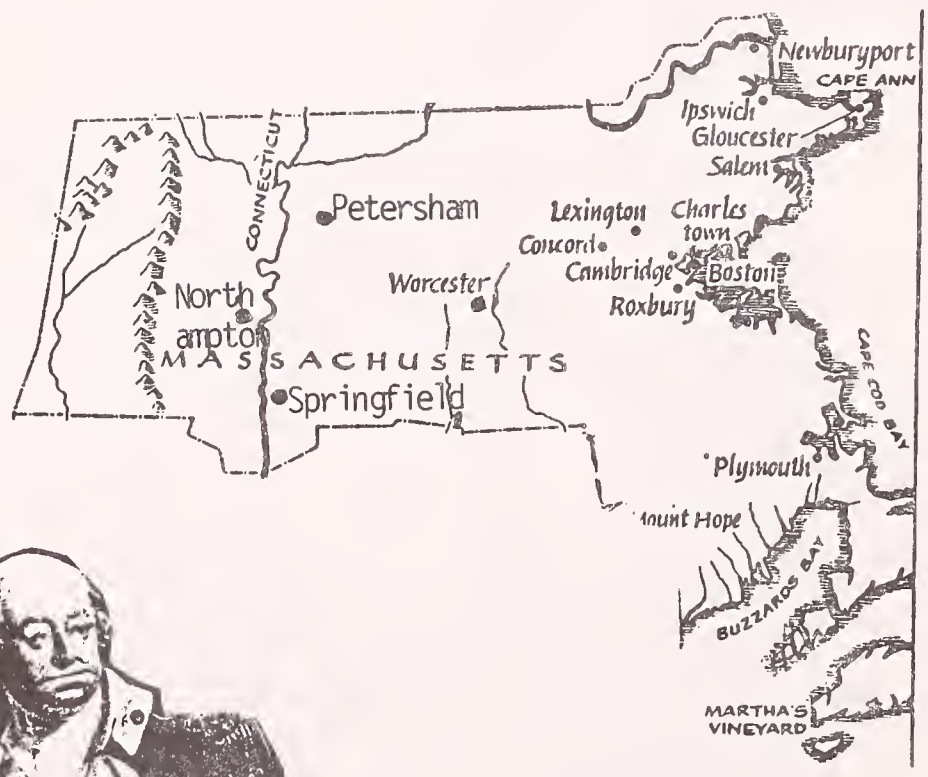
The Ingersolls kept a tavern on the corner of North and Depot Streets in Pittsfield. Jared must have been in the ruckus with Shay at Springfield as a rebel and was a prisoner in the jail in Northampton. His wife remained in charge of the tavern. A group of militiamen who had helped disperse the rebels and were feeling their oats tried to take advantage of Huldah's troubles. They brought a barrel of cider into her barroom and set it up, ostensibly to sell it by the glass. The spirited landlady pitched the cider into the street and firmly stated that she kept tavern there. The militiamen knew when they had met their match and skulked off.

(Obviously Huldah was a doughty lady! Her measurements are not available, but it must have been a keg of cider rather than a barrel.)

Jared's brother Thomas Ingersoll (43 W) was promoted to major of militia as a result of his actions in Shay's Rebellion. Apparently the brothers were on opposite sides in the dispute. It is interesting to speculate if there was ever a confrontation. Huldah could probably have licked them both, at once. More about Thomas and his settlement in Canada appears somewhere in these pages.

Location Of The Rebellion

The following map of the state of Massachusetts shows the locations of the principal events of Shay's Rebellion. Since the rebels were all farmers they came from all points between communities shown.



General Benjamin Lincoln

The Other Jared And Some of His Descendants

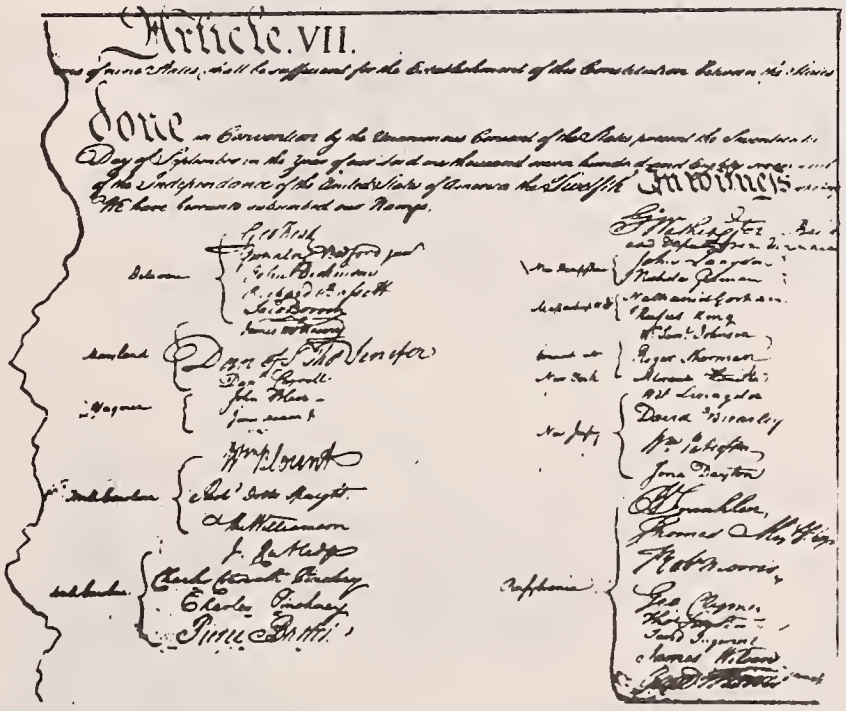
Jared Ingersoll, Jr. (39 W - Chart J - 4th Generation), was born October 24, 1749 at New Haven, Connecticut, the son of that Jared who incurred the displeasure of some 'patriots' for his temporary role as a Crown Stamp Act Agent in 1765.

Like his father, Jared was a gifted man. He graduated from Yale at the age of 16. Then he studied law with his father in New Haven. When his family moved to Pennsylvania in 1771, he remained to settle the family's affairs and then he joined his parents. In Philadelphia he read law under the aegis of Joseph Reed and was admitted to the Pennsylvania bar in 1773. On his father's advice he continued his education at the Middle Temple in London and in France. When he returned to this country in 1778, his parents had relocated in New Haven, but Jared elected to remain in Philadelphia and to establish his legal practice there.

Jared Ingersoll
by C.W.Peale

On December 6, 1781, Jared married Elizabeth Pettit of Philadelphia, a niece of Joseph Reed.

Jared served as a member of the Continental Congress in 1780-81. His demonstrated ability and growing reputation as a legal mind earned him designation as one of eight Pennsylvania delegates to the Constitutional Convention in 1787. His fellow delegates often sought his advice regarding legal problems in drafting the document, but he did not engage in debate.


Article. VII.

done in Convention by the unanimous Consent of the States present the Seventeenth Day of September in the Year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and Eighty seven and of the Independence of the United States of America the Twelfth In Witness

At the left above is a very poor copy of the lower right portion of page 4 of the Constitution of the United States, showing the signatures of the delegates who signed it. The names of the Pennsylvania delegates are at the bottom of the second column. If you cannot read this, visit the National Archives in Washington where you may read the original, under glass. Or, in lieu of that trip, consult the list of printed names at the right, which are arranged in the same order as they appear on the original Constitution.

CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES

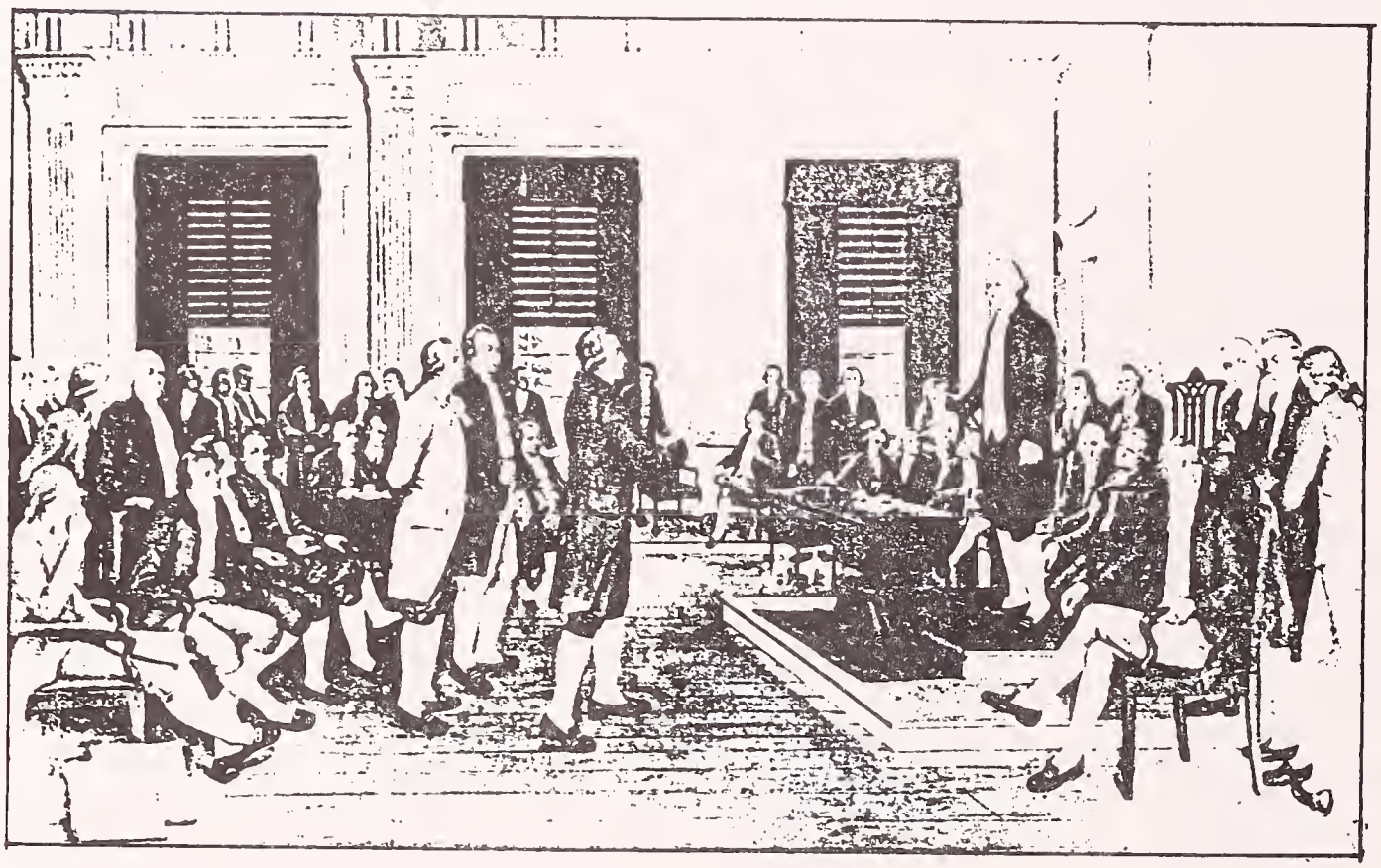
New Hampshire	JOHN LANGDON NICHOLAS GILMAN
Massachusetts	NATHANIEL GORHAM RUFUS KING
Connecticut	WM. SAML. JOHNSON ROGER SHERMAN
New York	ALEXANDER HAMILTON
New Jersey	WIL: LIVINGSTON DAVID BREARLEY. WM. PATERSON. JONA: DAYTON
Pennsylvania	B FRANKLIN THOMAS MIFFLIN ROBT MORRIS GEO. CLYMER THO: FITZSIMONS JARED INGERSOLL JAMES WILSON GOUV MORRIS
Delaware	GEO: READ GUNNING BEDFORD jun JOHN DICKINSON RICHARD BASSETT JACO: BROOM
Maryland	JAMES MCHENRY DAN OF ST THO: JENIFER DANL CARROLL
Virginia	JOHN BLAIR— JAMES MADISON JR.
North Carolina	WM. BLOUNT RICHD. DOBBS SPRAIGHT HU WILLIAMSON J. RUTLEDGE
South Carolina	CHARLES COTESWORTH PINCKNEY CHARLES PINCKNEY PIERCE BUTLER
Georgia	WILLIAM FEW ABR BALDWIN

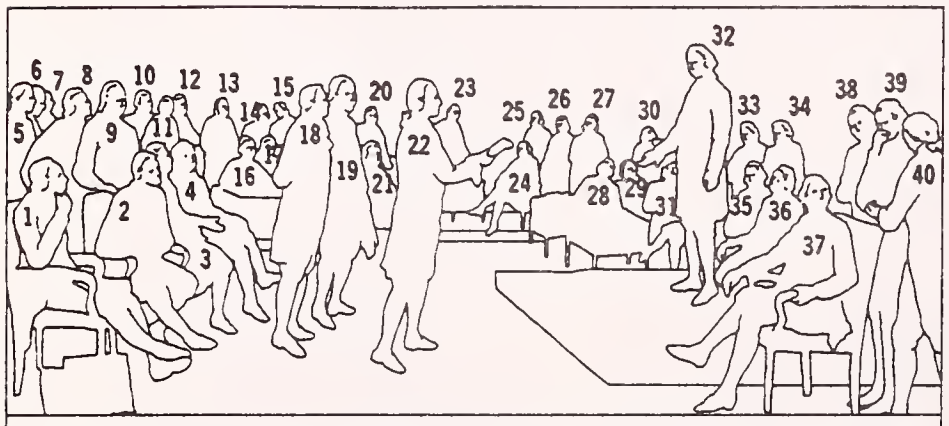
The Other Jared And Some of His Descendants

Jared Ingersoll, Jr. continued

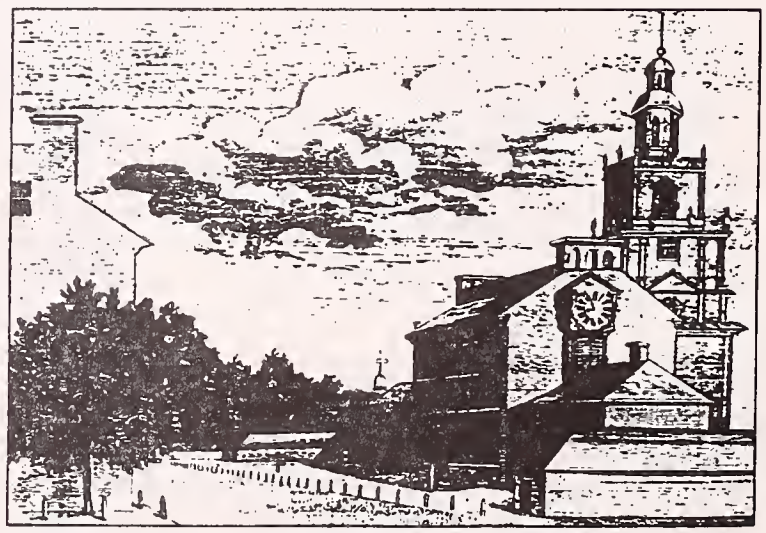
When Jared was asked what he thought of the plan proposed by the Convention, he said, "All things considered, most eligible." Not an all-out enthusiastic opinion!

Many prominent artists have painted their conceptions of what the Constitutional Convention looked like at some dramatic moment. This one was painted by John H. Froelich and hangs in the State Capital in Harrisburg, Pa. It purports to show all of the delegates, although they were not all there every day while the Convention was in session. Jared was among those who were there every day. Of course, he lived just a short distance away. Not many will recognize any one other than Washington and Franklin if it were not for the identifying key also provided here.





1. James Madison, Va.; 2. Charles Pinckney, S.C.; 3. Jacob Broom, Del.; 4. Rufus King, Mass.; 5. John Langdon, N.H.; 6. John Blair, Va.; 7. Richard D. Spaight, N.C.; 8. Pierce Butler, S.C.; 9. Benjamin Franklin, Pa.; 10. Jonathan Dayton, N.J.; 11. William Blount, N.C.; 12. Richard Bassett, Del.; 13. Abraham Baldwin, Ga.; 14. Nicholas Gilman, N.H.; 15. William Paterson, N.J.; 16. Gouverneur Morris, Pa.; 17. Jared Ingersoll, Pa.; 18. James Wilson, Pa.; 19. Nathaniel Gorham, Mass.; 20. William Livingston, N.J.; 21. Robert Morris, Pa.; 22. John Rutledge, S.C.; 23. William Few, Ga.; 24. William S. Johnson, Conn.; 25. Thomas Mifflin, Pa.; 26. James McHenry, Md.; 27. C.C. Pinckney, S.C.; 28. William Jackson, secretary, Pa.; 29. George Clymer, Pa.; 30. David Brearley, N.J.; 31. Daniel St. Thomas Jenifer, Md.; 32. George Washington, Va.; 33. Daniel Carroll, Md.; 34. George Read, Del.; 35. Hugh Williamson, N.C.; 36. Gunning Bedford Jr., Del.; 37. Alexander Hamilton, N.Y.; 38. Roger Sherman, Conn.; 39. John Dickinson, Del. (he actually left early and signed by proxy.); 40. Thomas Fitzsimmons, Pa.



This is where it happened in 1787. Pennsylvania State House, now Independence Hall.

Jared is #17, sitting quietly between #16's left arm and #18's right arm.

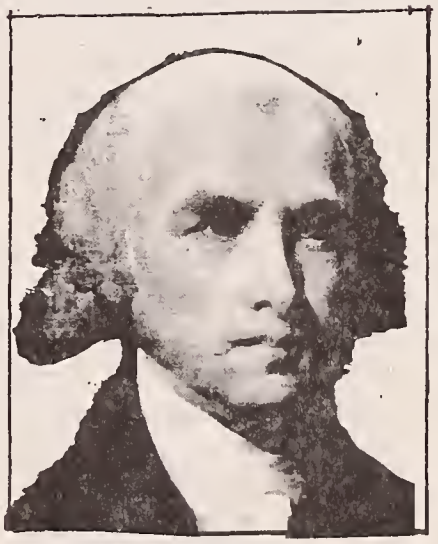
The Other Jared And Some of His Descendants

Jared Ingersoll, Jr., continued

Dewitt Clinton

Jared was the first Attorney General for the State of Pennsylvania, serving 1790-1799 and again 1811-1817. He was Chief Judge of the U.S. Circuit Court and for a brief time Chief Judge of the District Court of the City and County of Philadelphia. In 1812 he was an unsuccessful Republican-Federalist candidate for Vice President on the ticket with Dewitt Clinton. They were defeated by James Madison and Elbridge Gerry.

We have this brief description. "He was about 5'9" tall, lean, erect. His complexion was fair, his hair light colored and his features neither large nor salient." It is also said that he had a commanding presence in court. He continued to wear a powdered wig and knee breeches long after the fashion had passed out of style. He was evidently very eloquent in court and out of it.



James Madison

Historians, even reputable ones, often confuse Jared with his father, attributing one's actions to the other and even mis-labeling the father's portrait as that of the son, and vice versa.

Occasionally some writer will designate Jared, Sr. as a signer of the Constitution, when he had been dead for years.

The family that Jared established in Philadelphia became prominent in the city's social, cultural and political life and it so remains, to this day.

(Note: nowhere in my reading did I find the younger Jared referred to as Junior. I have no explanation for this. In order that I might clearly distinguish him from his father, I have added the "Jr." tag. It may help the reader in identifying this eminent gentleman.)

Charles Jared Ingersoll (78 W - Chart J - 5th Generation) was born on October 3, 1782, the son of Jared Ingersoll and Elizabeth Pettit Ingersoll. He attended Princeton University, graduating in 1799 at the age of 16. He studied law and was admitted to the bar in Pennsylvania and was associated with his father's law office there.

James Knox Polk.

For a time, Charles Jared was attached to the U.S. Embassy in Paris. He was elected to Congress as a Democrat for the 1813-15 term and then served as United States District Attorney 1815-1829. Briefly, he was a member of the State Legislature and was again elected to Congress 1841-1847 where he became Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. President Polk nominated him to be Minister to France in 1847, but the Senate refused to confirm the appointment. Charles Jared was a prolific writer, publishing poems, plays, historical tracts and a four-volume history of the War of 1812.

The Other Jared And Some of His Descendants

Charles Jared Ingersoll, continued

When serving in Washington, Charles was easily recognizable, since he made a point of wearing the buff and blue of the Revolutionary Continental Line. He had inherited his father's sartorial stubbornness.

Charles Jared married Mary Wilicocks of Philadelphia on October 18, 1804. They had seven sons and two daughters. The Biddles, Phillips, Bullitts, Whartons and Ingersolls were contemporaries, and all prominent in the social, business and cultural life of Philadelphia.

Charles Jared died May 14, 1862, in Philadelphia.

Joseph Reed Ingersoll (79 W - Chart J - 5th Generation) was born June 14, 1786 in Philadelphia, the son of Jared and Elizabeth Pettit Ingersoll. He graduated from Princeton in 1804, was admitted to the bar and became associated with his father's law office. On September 22, 1813 he married Ann Wilicocks, a sister of the wife of Charles Jared.

London

Joseph served in Congress 1835-37 and from 1843-49 as a Republican. He was a supporter of Henry Clay and delivered the eulogy at the funeral of Chief Justice John Marshall. Nominated to be U.S. Minister to England by President Fillmore, his nomination was approved by the Senate and he spent a year in England. James Buchanan, future president, succeeded him at that post.

John Marshall

After 1852, Joseph retired from legal practice and devoted his time to literary works. He and Ann had three children, only one of whom, Mary, lived to adulthood. Joseph died February 20, 1868 in Philadelphia and is buried there, in St. Peter's Protestant Episcopal Church.

Edward Ingersoll (80 W - Chart J - 5th Generation) was born July 27, 1790 in Philadelphia, son of Jared and Elizabeth Pettit Ingersoll. He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1808. He married Catherine Ann Brinton. Edward was the author of many legal books including a Digest of United States Laws 1798-1820. He wrote poems under the pseudonym Horace. He and Catherine had one child, Jared. born May 13, 1823. Young Jared graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1842 and married Jane Truefit. Would you believe that he also studied and practiced law?

Edward Ingersoll died July 6, 1841, in Florence, Italy.

The Other Jared And Some of His Descendants

Charles Ingersoll (214 W - No Chart - 6th Generation) was born December 8, 1805 in Philadelphia, a son of Charles Jared and Mary Wilicocks Ingersoll. He was a leading Democrat and an opponent of abolition. He publicly discouraged enlistments in the Union Army. At a rally outside a hall in which George William Curtis, an anti-slavery adherent, was to appear, Ingersoll spoke in a manner 'not notable for its restraint.' Only the presence of 500 city police in or about the hall prevented a riot. He was a loudly vocal opponent of Lincoln's conduct of the Civil War. A warrent was issued for his arrest, but pressure from Washington led to its withdrawal. He died at sea August 23, 1882.

Edward Ingersoll (218 W - No Chart - 6th Generation) was born April 2, 1817, a son of Charles Jared and Mary Wilicocks Ingersoll. He was also a vocal opponent of Lincoln's conduct of the war. On April 13, 1865, the day before Lincoln was assassinated, Edward made a speech in New York City defending secession and declaring the Union war debt unconstitutional. He returned to Philadelphia on April 27, 1865 and was met by an angry crowd as he alighted from the train at Kensington Depot. Edward drew a pistol to defend himself and was arrested for carrying a concealed weapon.

His brother Charles, coming to the police station to see him, was pulled from his carriage by another mob. He was slowly rescued by reluctant police but not until he had taken a savage beating. Shades of great-grandfather Jared.

Edward died in Philadelphia on February 19, 1893.

Millard Fillmore

James Buchanan

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

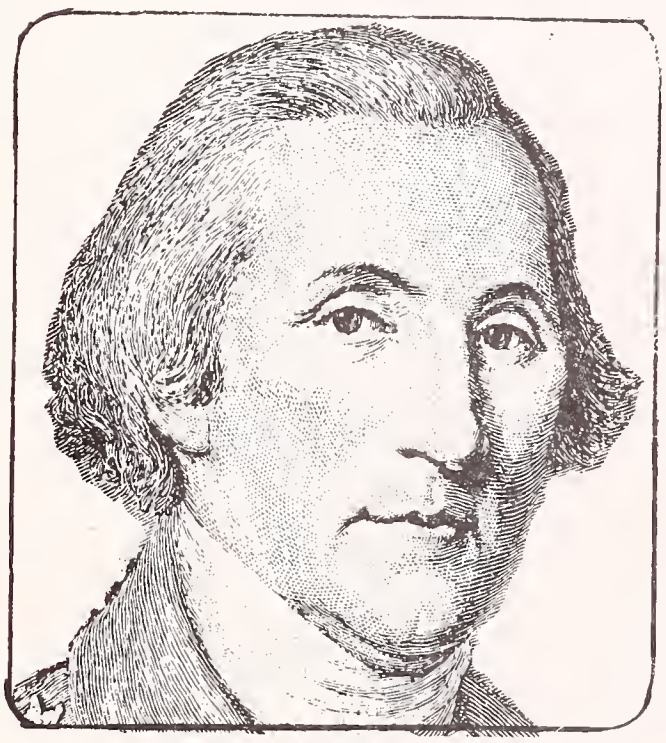
Spies, Traitors and Highwaymen

Henry Hubbard Ingersoll (193 H - No Chart - 6th Generation)

Henry was born February 25, 1809 at Stamford, Conn., son of Levi Ingersoll (71-H) and Sarah Hubbard Ingersoll. He died May 3, 1881 at West Hoboken, N.J. and is buried in Peekskill, N.Y. On December 10, 1832 he married Hannah A, Paulding, daughter of Major John Paulding and Hester Denike Paulding of New York. Henry and Hannah had 10 children. She died February 27, 1850 and he married, second, Eleanor Philenda ------. The second marriage was without issue.

The rest of this concerns the part played by John Paulding, father of Henry's first wife Hannah, in exposing the treachery of Benedict Arnold and the spying of John André.

George Washington's Strange Prophesy

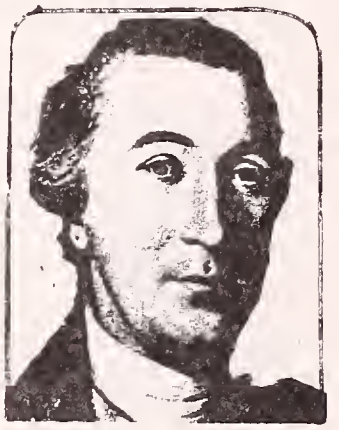


George Washington
Sans wig and powder.

On November 18, 1775, General Washington wrote to Joseph Reed of Philadelphia:

> "Such a dirty mercenary spirit pervades the whole that I should not be surprised at any disaster that may happen."

And many disasters did befall the cause of freedom over the next eight years. A near catastrophe, almost accidently averted, stunned, angered and saddened the General. This is part of that story.



Joseph Reed of
Philadelphia

The Writer's Problems

This is a lengthy episode. Attempts to shorten it obscured its peculiar nuances and stripped it to bare-bones dull. I have restored most of what I originally threw in the dumper. Some details may seem extraneous at first, but they do contribute to the whole, somehow. Please be patient. There's a bang or two in there somewhere. I've got about 200 hours of research invested in this story and I've rewritten it several times. I'm sensitive about it.

Libraries abound in Arnold biographies and commentaries. He led a tumultuous life before his treason and a hectic one afterward. His actions in 1779-1780 placed his name indelibly in American life and language as a synonym for "traitor." Granted, he did a lot of good, even fine and patriotic things, but the big, bad mistake blots them out. These events are important since, had Arnold's plan succeeded, the Revolution's outcome and the course of subsequent history might have been much different.

Spies, Traitors and Highwaymen

The Writer's Problems, continued

Other than background, my efforts are limited to describing phases in the final act of treachery. Reading of many versions revealed general agreement but widely divergent and often contradictory details. In some of these conflicts I have shown the version I thought the most likely as part of the text with the others in brackets [] following. Some stories are out-and-out white-wash; others do not shrink from the truth but may be unfair in denying any justification whatsoever.

The tale bulges with "maybe", "what if" and "if only" situations. There are comedies and tragedies of error. Bizarre, almost unbelievable deviations from plans smack of contrived slap-stick. Very little worked right for the bad-side participants, thank goodness.

Murphy's Law, as promulgated 200 years later, certainly applied here. If anything can go wrong, it will. One failure or error led to others, one domino tumbling a dozen, each of them another dozen, helter-skelter, willy-nilly.

I outline high-lights in semi-coherent order, but intriguing detail must still fall unused, alas. There is material here for seven ten-hour television mini-series, each complete with suspense, many characters, excitement, costumes, surprise, sex, violence, patriotism, greed, lust, bad-guys and good-guys, aliases, codes, coincidence, politics, strip-acts, plays within plays, double takes, disguises, stupidity, brilliance, unexplained oddities, cloak and dagger. And that's the short version! Prime time stuff!

Introducing Benedict Arnold

Benedict was born January 14, 1741 at Norwich Town, Conn., son of Benedict Arnold and Hannah King (nee Waterman) Arnold, each of them from an old, respected family. The first Arnold in America helped Roger Williams to found Rhode Island. The second Arnold (the first Benedict) was elected Governor of Rhode Island ten times, serving fifteen years. Our Benedict's mother's family helped form Norwich Town in 1660.

Younger Benedict V

The Arnold family had ups and downs. Benedict's father (Benedict III) got his start by marrying the widow of his boss, Absalom King. Hannah had eleven children; of these Benedict IV and eight others died young. Only Hannah and Benedict V (ours) survived.

In 1741 Benedict III was prominent and prosperous but he became an alcoholic and the family had fallen on bad times in 1754. Mrs. Arnold arranged to apprentice her son to a relative, Dr. Daniel Lathrop. a physician by training, an apothecary by trade and a man of some substance in Connecticut.

Young Arnold, restless and impatient, served three times in the militia. In 1757 he answered the Fort William alarm, his first military responsibility at 16. This alarm was quickly over without any action for Benedict. The following March he left Dr. Lathrop's without permission (or even asking for it) and walked to New York State where he joined the Westchester County militia. Pressure by Dr. Lathrop

Spies, Traitors and Highwaymen

Introducing Benedict Arnold, continued

and Hannah's friends secured his release. In the spring of 1759 he answered a call for volunteers and re-enlisted in the New York militia. He served a few months, got bored and went AWOL. About a year later he returned to service. Only the death of his mother on August 15, 1759 and his youth kept him from being charged as a deserter. His father died early in 1762.

At 21, financed in large part by Dr. Lathrop, Benedict moved to New Haven where he became a bookseller and druggist. He went to England to purchase inventory on credit. His store sign read:

B. Arnold, Druggist
Bookseller & C
From London
Sibi totique

The Latin translates as "for himself and everybody." He obviously wanted to make prospective customers aware that he had all the best stuff from England, but the wording is vague to modern ears. The store handled cosmetics, jewelry, aphrodisiacs and the customary herbs, powders, nostrums and cure-alls, plus buckles and bows. The shop became very popular with the town ladies and Benedict prospered. Attracted by the possibilities of importing and exporting, he purchased a sloop and engaged actively in trade with Canada the West Indies and New England. Like most contemporary traders he was not averse to a little well-paying smuggling.

On February 22, 1767 he married Margaret Mansfield of New Haven, by whom he had three sons, Benedict VI (1768), Richard (1769) and Henry (1772). Arnold was described at this time as thick-set and well proportioned, 5'9" tall, with unusual strength, agility and stamina, dark complected with dark hair, a distinctive nose, a high forehead, prominent chin and grey, piercing eyes. He was quick-minded, with a strong voice which he liked to use.

Arnold joined the Sons of Liberty early on and was a local leader or controller of these gangster-style patriots. In spite of their differences over the Stamp Act, he and Jared Ingersoll were good friends. Benedict was almost certainly in the Norwich Town gang that hanged Jared in effigy and may have demonstrated against him in New Haven. Jared defended Benedict in a couple of sticky suits, and represented him legally before and after the Stamp Act confrontation.

B. Arnold Mansfield

Arnold's Military Exploits

Benedict handled with dispatch, imagination and courage a number of military assignments early in the Revolution:

Rigorous and successful service in bringing cannon cross-country over the mountains from Ticonderoga to Cambridge in 1775 for use at Bunker Hill and the subsequent seige of Boston.

Arnold's Military Exploits, continued

The list goes on:

Invasion of Canada in early 1776, a military disaster, from which Arnold extricated his forces, although seriously wounded in the left leg.

Spectacular defense of Crown Point in mid-1776, forcing General Carleton to cancel an invasion from Canada.

Chasing General Tryon and his raiding British army out of Connecticut in early 1777, although his hastily mustered militiamen were vastly outnumbered.

Heroic and battle-winning action at Saratoga in late 1777, when he was again wounded in the same leg.

Military Governor of Philadelphia after the British evacuation in June, 1778.

Wherever he was and whatever he was doing, Benedict managed to antagonize his fellow officers, civilian authorities in Massachusetts, Connecticut and Philadelphia and especially the Continental Congress. General Washington, however, thought highly of him and valued his military sense and instincts. Arnold was constantly treated unjustly by Congress in regard to promotion, investigations of his expenses, accounting for his expenses. At one time he was owed three years' salary. This brings us to his disillusionment and the beginning of his acts against his country.

Introducing John Andre

John André was born May 2, 1750 in London. His mother was French, Marie Louise (Girandot) André; his father. Anthony André, a naturalized Englishman of a prosperous Swiss Huguenot family. The elder André developed a profitable importing business in London. Young André studied at the University of Geneva and acquired fluency in German, French and Italian and displayed a talent for drawing. Anthony died in April, 1762.

John purchased a second-lieutenant's commission and served with the Seventh Foot Regiment in Germany in 1773. He sailed to America in 1774, arriving in Philadelphia. Then he proceeded to Quebec to join his regiment, a part of the forces of Sir Guy Carleton.

On October 18, 1775 he was captured by American forces led by James Livingston in an attack on Ft. Chambly, about 20 miles east of Montreal on the Richelieu River. He was brought back a prisoner of war and was held first in Lancaster and then Carlisle, Pa. As an officer he could live in private homes, but none would accomodate him and he was forced to stay at taverns. The Continental Congress would feed him but his quarters and clothing were provided by the British. No love was lost between John and his captors.

Spies, Traitors and Highwaymen

Introducing John André, continued

In November, 1776, in a prisoner exchange, André was released and joined the British army in New York. His observations as to his captivity attracted the attention of Sir William Howe, the Commander-in-Chief. He approved John's purchase of a captaincy and his appointment in June, 1777 as an aide to General Charles Grey. During the British advance on Philadelphia, André took an enthusiastic part in the bloody massacre and the extermination of the American forces at Paoli. From 150 to 300 colonial soldiers were killed in a surprise attack, mostly by bayonet.

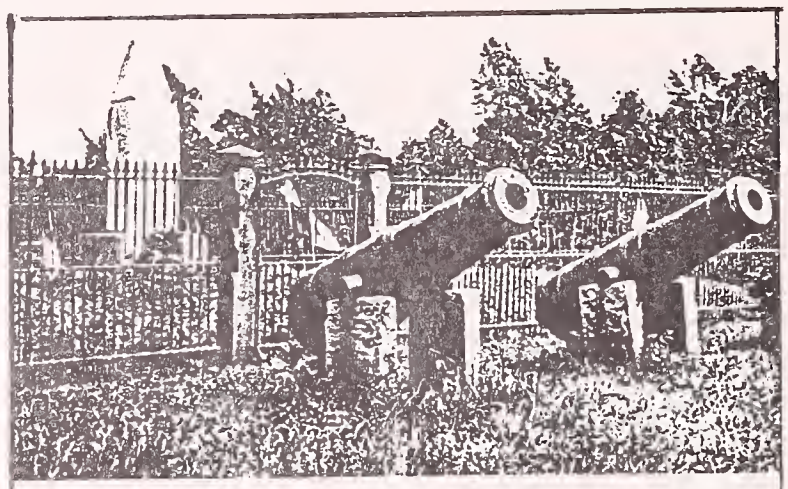


Photo by the author
Monument at Malvern, Pennsylvania, marking the resting place of fifty-three American soldiers slain in the Massacre of Paoli.

The spoils of war. While American troops suffer in the cold at Valley Forge, Howe and the British enjoy the comforts of Philadelphia. By J.L.G. Ferris.

André was young, pleasant, well mannered, ambitious, handsome, socially acceptable, poet, artist, party-planner, singer, playwright, embroiderer, ladies' man. Fellow officers were not always appreciative of his military stance, however. He often flirted with Peggy Shippen and many other Philadelphia belles during the rather worldly occupation of the city by the British. John was described as 5'9" tall, slender and graceful, of a dark complexion, features almost effeminate in their delicacy.

When the British retreated to New York City, André joined the staff of Sir Henry Clinton, in charge of intelligence. He and Clinton were on very friendly terms and it is quite likely that André received preferential treatment.

Maybe it was gossip circulated by disgruntled officers, but there were rumors that he and Sir Henry had a homosexual relationship. André was promoted to the rank of Provincial Major and made deputy adjutant and later full adjutant. During the British campaign against South Charlestown, S.C., he served with distinction. Now begins the adventure with Benedict Arnold.

At the right is a sketch of Miss Peggy Shippen by André. She is wearing a costume for a play written by John. Guess who designed her head-dress. Right!

André sketched Peggy Shippen in the headdress he designed for her to wear in the Mischianza ball. COURTESY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Spies, Traitors and Highwaymen

Introducing John André, continued

At the right is a picture of Sir Henry Clinton, commander-in-chief of British forces with headquarters in New York. He became a busy participant in the negotiations with Benedict Arnold.

(Note: According to published works, portraits of John André were painted by Thomas Gainsborough (1727-1788) and Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723-1792). In these portraits John is depicted differently, although the Gainsborough likeness resembles other portraits of him. Looking at the two pictures side by side, I'd want evidence other than my eyes to be convinced they represent the same person. If André sat for these they must have been painted before 1775. Would André or his family been able to afford two artists at their peak, with royalty among their clients, charging what the market would bear? My guess is that these were painted after André's death from other pictures, in the flurry of praise for André in Britain after the execution. This is just what this story needs - more unanswered questions and more guesses!

The Neutral Ground - A No-Man's Land

The undelineated 20 miles in Westchester County between the British forces in New York City and the Continental Army lines to the north in the Hudson Valley, was the stamping ground, late in 1780, of two semi-military and self-serving gangs.

One group, loosely organized, claiming to have Loyalist sympathies was led by Claudius Smith, the "The Cowboy of the Ramapos"~[Colonel James DeLancey, the "Cowboy of the Bronx"], depending on which story you read. Claudius Smith was real enough since we have evidence that he was hanged, with his boots off, a short time later. A James De Lancey was a large landowner on Long Island. They may have worked in cahoots, Smith stealing, De Lancey fencing the loot. Regardless of leadership, these were people without principle, raiding valley farms, running off live-stock and driving the animals to the lucrative markets in New York City. Poorly guarded, slow wagon trains carrying goods to Washington's forces were prime targets. Story has it that "Cowboys" did not hesitate to torture people to make them reveal the hiding places of valuables, or to make sudden terror descents on small communities, robbing and killing, often wantonly.

Spies, Traitors and Highwaymen

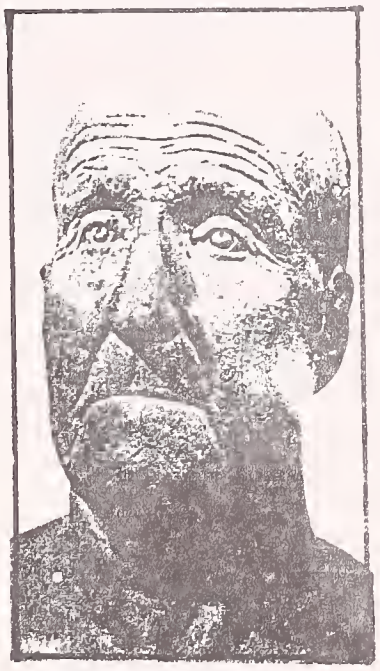
The Neutral Ground - A No-Man's Land, continued

"Skinners", ostensibly patriot groups, acting under a license to hijack "Cowboys", liked to ambush them as they came from New York, probably three sheets in the wind, too drunk to defend themselves effectively, but with pockets full of proceeds from sale of stolen live-stock. These fine folks would strip their victims to find hidden currency or jewels, and then appropriate the clothing too if it looked worth while. Ergo -"Skinners."

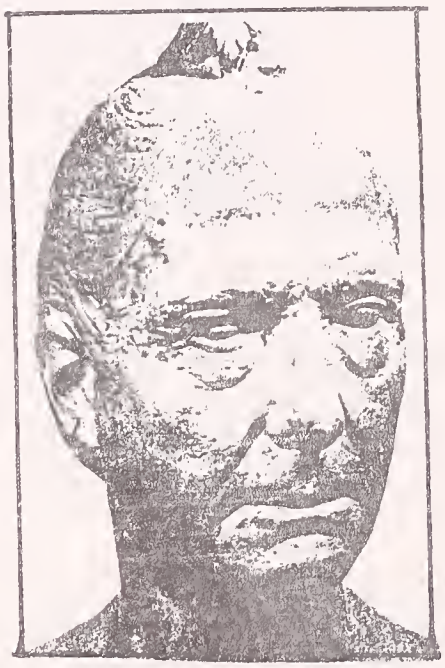
In effect, the members of these groups, either, were simply highwaymen, freebooters, rascals, thieves, land-pirates, not concerned with politics and certainly not the welfare of their victims or even simple humanity. They were engaged in terrorizing and robbing anyone unarmed or careless. Some stories, patently prejudiced, refer to "Skinners" as countrymen, irregulars, volunteer guards, militiamen. These appelations are sops to weak-kneed journalism. They were scoundrels and thieves, no matter how you say it.

"Cowboy" and "Skinner" gangs sometimes worked in collusion, given a big enough target. So much for patriotism. Loot determined policy!

Here are pictures of three "Skinners" who become part of our story. These are not likenesses. They are photographs of earth- or mud-masks made of the men when they were much older.



John Paulding
22 in 1780



David Williams
25 in 1780

Isaac Van Wirt
20 in 1780

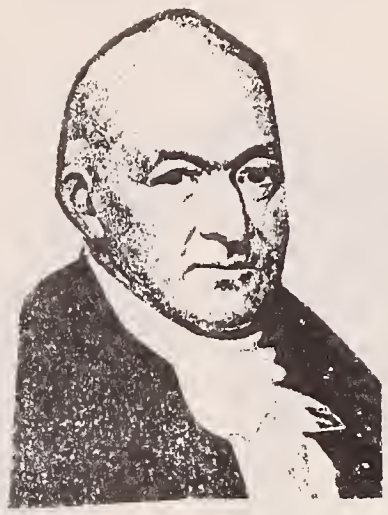
When John Paulding's daughter was married 52 years later, he was called Major, but he wasn't an officer at the time of these events. He was described as over six feet tall and strong and was literate [barely literate] [illiterate], choose one.

I have reproductions of seven drawings or sketches of the three "Skinners" in action as they apprehended André. There are always three men but their actions, looks and clothing vary widely. In one case they appear in fringed buckskins, a la Daniel Boone, the buckskins green, the fringes red. Sartorial splendor! Wait! They also sport headgear resembling the feather-tufted plush Tyrolean hats popular as week-end attire for business executives in the 1960's or 1970's. Or Kojak's television hat! The illustration used offered the best reproduction possibilities and is neither ultra-dramatic nor absurd.

Spies, Traitors and Highwaymen

The Continental and British Spy Systems

George Washington and his advisors, early on, organized a surprisingly efficient spy system using ardent freedom lovers in enemy occupied territory to observe enemy action, to collect information and to deliver it. Devious and often quite clever correspondence delivery routes were developed and used, with unique signals (petticoats on a clothesline), codes, drops, invisible ink, all the paraphernalia of modern spy-fiction writers. Washington had a pretty fair idea of what the British were doing and planning, but in this case the enemy had very carefully covered its tracks. One of Washington's top agents, Major Benjamin Tallmadge, working under-cover as second-in-command of the North Castle military outpost, was tipped off, almost too late, that some shenanigans in Continental high places were imminent. This tip originated in the New York City espionage system but the identity of the informant died with Tallmadge many years later.



BENJAMIN TALLMADGE
1754–1835
Soldier, United States Congressman

We have this concrete evidence of the country's debt to these under-cover people, a letter written by Washington near the time of the war's conclusion, or shortly thereafter:

> "Before these accounts are finally closed, justice and propriety call upon me to signify that there are Persons within the British lines - if they are not dead or removed - who have a claim upon the Public under the strongest assurances of compensation from me for their services in conveying me private intelligence, and which, when exhibited, I should think myself in honor bound to pay."

The British army was an old hand at military spying, having had centuries of practice and experience. It wasn't difficult to find many Loyalists, apparently living complacently behind the American lines, or even life-long residents ready and willing to betray their upstart patriot neighbors. Cash was a part of policy. British intelligence was well organized, efficient and, most important, well supplied with funds.

I was amazed at the relative ease with which letters were interchanged between the combatants. Movement in the Neutral Ground was unrestricted if you could avoid the "Skinners" and "Cowboys." Spying was easy and plentiful, most of it undetected then and even unknown for years afterward. Some unfortunate spies were caught. Most of them were hung, probably including some innocent ones, on either side.

Warrior For Sale

Benedict Arnold's wife died June 19, 1775 while he was soldiering on Lake Champlain. He had no other romantic interest until he was appointed Military Governor of Philadelphia in May, 1778. Then and there he met a young lady half his age, Peggy Shippen, who had been very friendly with John André and other British officers when the British occupied the city. Her father was once thought to be overly friendly with the enemy but that charge was later disproved.

Spies, Traitors and Highwaymen

Warrior For Sale, continued

Peggy Shippen Arnold
And her eldest son.

Benedict was smitten and courted her lavishly and publicly, although his bum leg kept him from dancing. He would sit in a corner with his leg propped up, while she petted him and fussed over him. On April 8, 1779, they were married at the Shippen home in a private, spartan ceremony [a brilliant affair]. Throughout the ceremony Benedict leaned on the arm of an aide, Major Matthew Clarkson. Question: At what point did Clarkson leave Benedict to his own devices?

At the left is a picture of Mrs. Arnold and their eldest son, painted several years later.

Whether Peggy convinced him to betray his country has been debated and argued, proven and disproven, for centuries. She was a clever actress and knew how to flaunt her femininity. Many people, including George Washington and Alexander Hamilton were temporarily taken in by her wiles. There is now no doubt that she knew what he was doing, then and later. Did she plant the idea in his noggin? I think she was guilty as sin.

Shortly thereafter, Arnold cautiously approached Sir Henry Clinton through a variety of intermediaries, offering to switch his loyalties to the Crown and to provide plans and details of Continental forces, deployment and defenses, for a price. Clinton was immediately receptive and urged Arnold to remain a Continental General, thinking he would be much more valuable functioning in that role than he would be as an active British officer.

During the ensuing 18 months about 45 exchanges of correspondence were made through devious and unlikely channels. Arnold used pseudonyms Monk, Moore and Gustavus. while André signed himself as John Anderson. They used a code based on a certain volume of Blackstone's commentaries. It is hard to imagine how this could be, but we must remember loyalists lived among the patriots and hidden patriots in enemy country. There never seemed to be a lack of willing messengers or others who could be deceived into innocently serving either side.

The Grand Plan [The Grand Stroke]

A scheme, perhaps inspired by Peggy, and proposed by Arnold to Clinton hinged upon his appointment as Commander at West Point, in a position so to weaken the Continental defenses of the lower Hudson that the British could grab control of the entire area without difficulty, cutting the colonies in two.

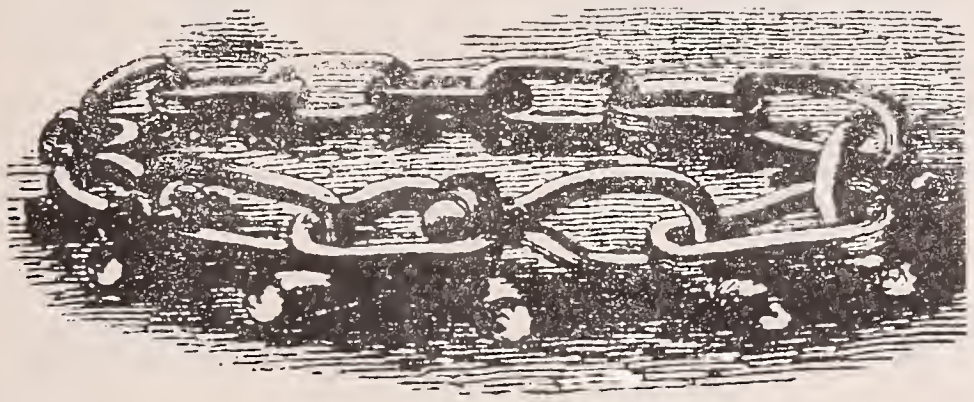
For this job he was to receive £20,000 ($100,000) if successful, £10,000 ($50,000) if not. The plot was well along and Arnold had already taken measures toward its accomplishment as we pick up the story.

West Point in 1780 was only a point of land on the west bank of the Hudson River, where two 90 degree turns and Constitution Island (Martelaer's Rock) narrowed the navigable channel. There were no academies, cadets or traditions. There were 10

Spies, Traitors and Highwaymen

The Grand Plan [The Grand Stroke], continued

well-placed but primitive forts, whose cannon dominated the narrows. And there was the chain, 1097 feet long, with 100 pound links, 12" x 18", of 2" bar iron, stretched across the river on large logs floating end-up just under the surface. Intact, this chain could prevent any ship from passing, holding it under the guns of the fort.



Relick of Chain preſerved at Weſt Point.

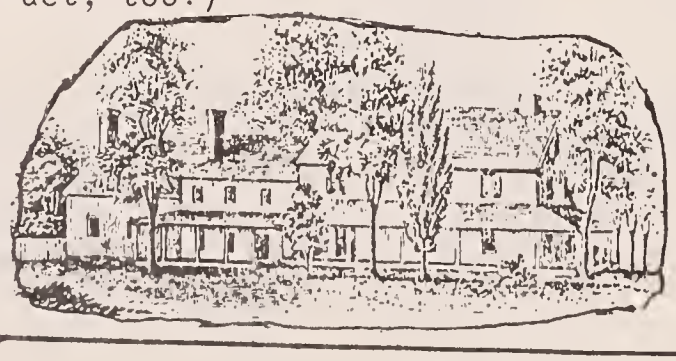
West Point

A. Constitution Island; B. Chain stretched across the Hudson River to prevent the passage of British ships; C. Fort Clinton.

General Washington upset the apple-cart by naming Arnold as Commander of his left wing, where he would have to ride continuously in directing mobile forces. George thought Benedict's talents would be wasted in a fixed command of primarily defensive stance. Arnold asked two friends, Robert R. Livingston and Philip Schuyler, to intervene, to try to convince the Chief that he (Arnold) couldn't cut the mustard on horseback. The General was adamant, since he valued Arnold's military sense and instincts. Finally, Benedict presented himself to Washington in Fishkill, leaning heavily on his ivory-handled cane, dragging his leg and probably grimacing. Washington relented and on August 3, 1780 he officially appointed Arnold as Commander of West Point and all its dependencies, which included the area from Fishkill to King's Ferry.

(Note: Benedict rode many miles in the fateful week, hither and yon and back again, without being appreciably handicapped. He could act, too!)

The quarters of the Commander at West Point was the confiscated home of a Loyalist, Colonel Beverley Robinson who was on the staff of Sir Henry Clinton in New York City. It was a comfortable place about a mile [half-mile] east of the Hudson, on a bluff, about 2 miles south of West Point. The previous West Point Commander, General Robert Howe, had also used it. No one has offered an explanation of why the Commander was not quartered at the Point along with the 1500 man garrison. It seems to me that would have been a hell of a lot more convenient and time-saving; comfort prevailed over efficiency. As ever!

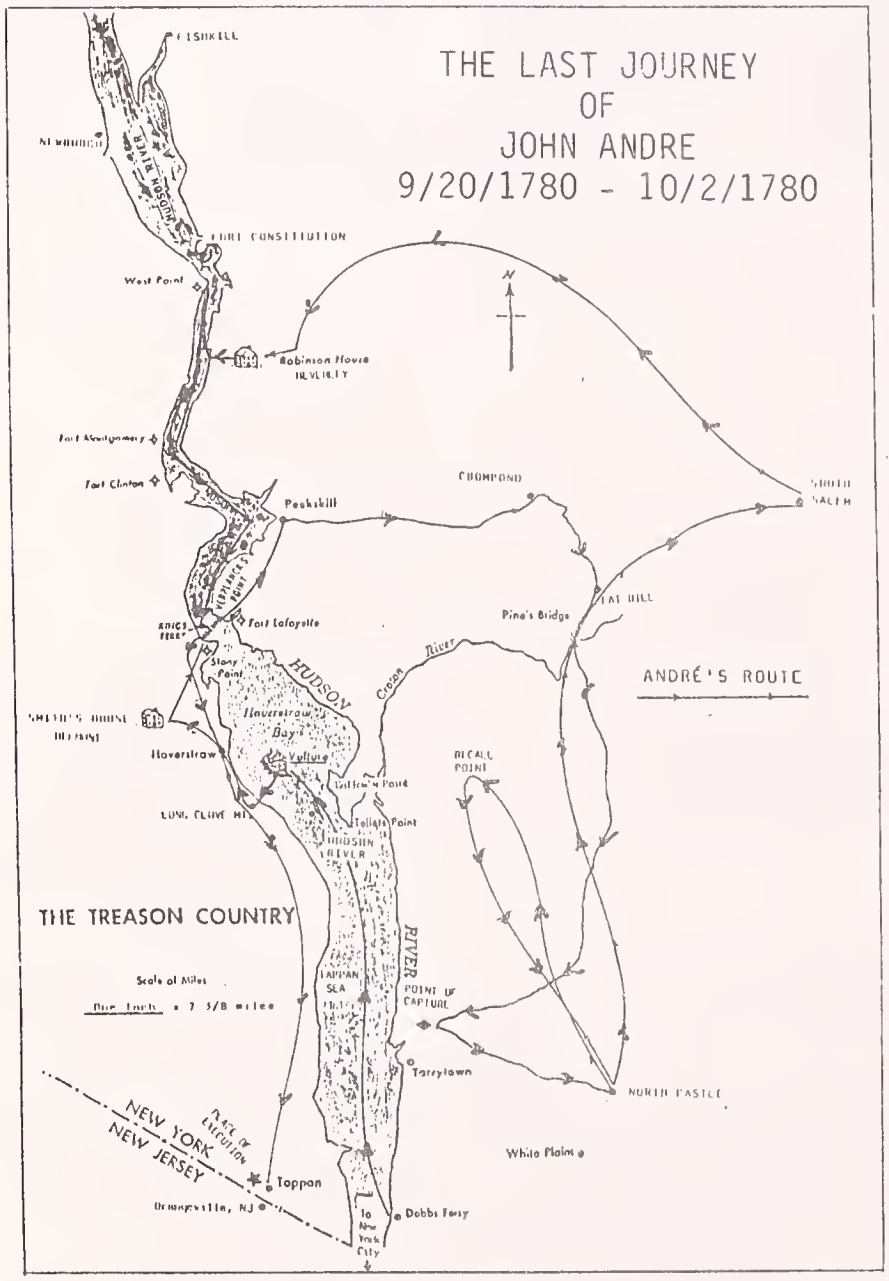


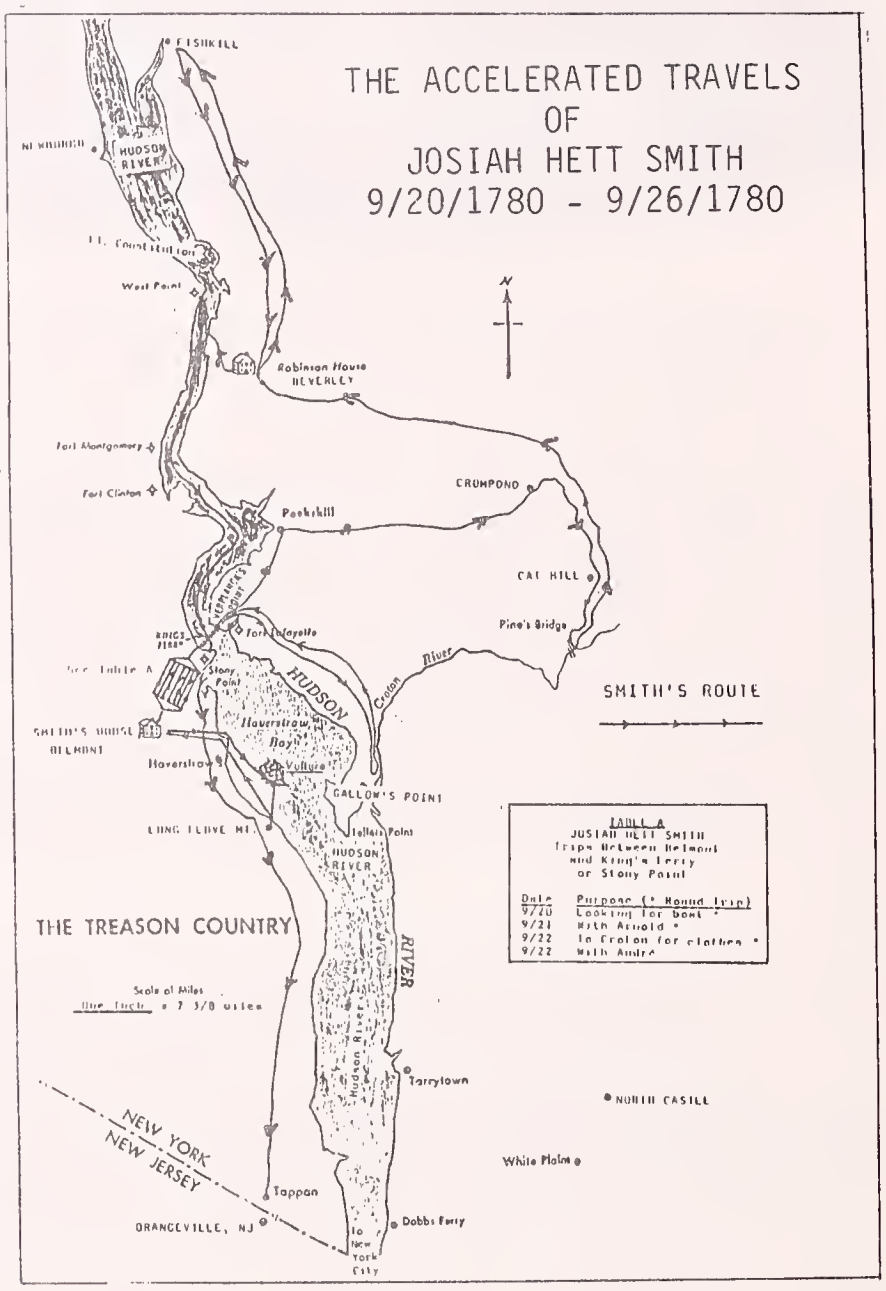
At the right are two views of Beverley (Robinson's house) drawn many years later from someone's memory or from older sketches. There are differences and similarities.

Spies, Traitors and Highwaymen

Editorial Interlude - Readers' Aids

In first reading of these historic details I was constantly confused as to direction, place names and geography. (I found that some of the authors of the stuff I was reading were at least as confused as I was.) My mental placement of people and events was sometimes grotesque or even impossible. I yearned for a map and finally prepared a doctored sketch of the area as I perceived it to be. Two versions of this are reproduced below. The scale may be inconsistent and the shapes askew, but you're better off with these. Your first impression that these are drawings of an adult lower bowel is erroneous. Depend on it!





These maps cover events which will be described shortly. Of course people on horseback do not ride in straight lines or sweeping curves. They used whatever roads, lanes, game trails, hunters' paths or alleys were available.

Spies, Traitors and Highwaymen

Editorial Interlude - Readers' Aids, continued

Two terms appearing in these descriptions will confuse anyone unfamiliar with the jargon then current. They confused me so I looked them up. I'll explain so the rest of this will make some sense.

Barge [bateau] [batteau] [launch] refers to a large rowboat or whaleboat, manned by six or eight oarsmen led by a coxswain. When water transportation was the normal mode, a barge was assigned to general field officers, always manned and ready. In today's Navy, an Admiral's barge is a luxuriously appointed big, fast motor boat.

"Under a flag" refers to an approach toward an enemy while displaying a flag of truce as an invitation to parley. Here it designates a small boat approaching a larger one, ostensibly on a peaceful mission, although a state of war existed. The color of the flag is not mentioned but it was probably white. There was a lot of this "under a flag" going on during this period, on both sides.

Disastrous Rehearsal For Disaster

When plans, prices, proposals and counter-proposals reached a point requiring a face-to-face meeting of principals or agents, a rendezvous was arranged for September 11, 1780. Arnold was to meet André on the Vulture, anchored near Dobb's Ferry. That morning, André rode from his Manhattan quarters to King's Bridge and at Spuyton Duyvil he boarded Vulture for the short sail upriver. But André had forgotten to advise the British gunboats in the area that a barge approaching Vulture was not to be accosted.

Sure enough, as Arnold's unarmed barge approached it was greeted by fire from the gunboats. The barge quickly changed course and the crew rowed desperately for the west bank. Arnold and the oarsmen remained there all day in a fortified strong point. waiting for someone to come from Vulture and invite Arnold aboard. On the sloop, André waited impatiently for Arnold to appear under a flag.

When darkness fell Arnold and the crew proceeded north for safety behind the American lines. André finally gave up and returned to New York. Wouldn't you think that by this time Clinton would have given up working with these losers? But I guess he had no choice but to go with what he had.

Warnings, Advice and Commands

Sir Henry Clinton knew the risks André would run in his meeting with Arnold or Arnold's people. He was fond of the young man, and carefully laid out for him the things he should and should not do. There were four major DO NOT rules, all of which André would violate, innocently or knowingly, to his sorrow. These were: do not enter the American lines; do not carry compromising documents; do not wear anything but the regulation British uniform; do not assume a false identity.

Preliminary Role of Vulture

Units of the British Navy operated with impunity in the lower Hudson where there were no opposing Continental naval vessels of any size. They could do what they wanted as long as they remained out of the effective range of shore batteries. The colonials did fortify the narrows at Stony Point and at West Point, inhibiting sailing that far north.

Spies, Traitors and Highwaymen

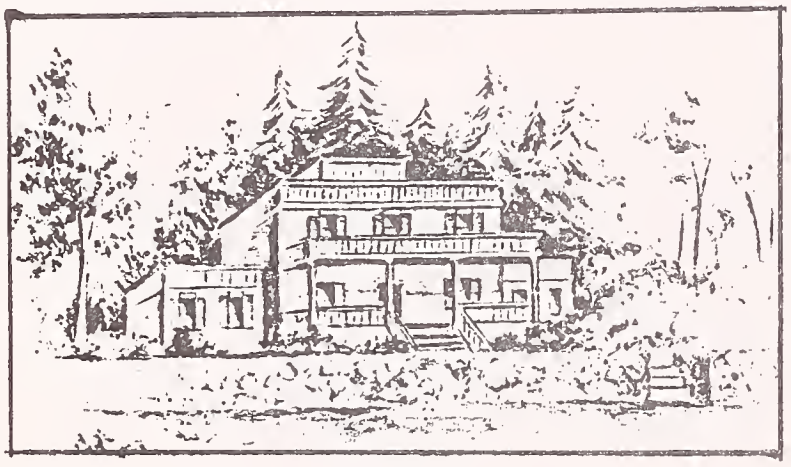
Preliminary Role of Vulture, continued

The sloop-of-war Vulture under the command of Captain Andrew Sutherland had ridden at anchor intermittently in Haverstraw Bay off Teller's Point on the east bank ever since Anthony Wayne and his men surprised the British in May and drove them out of Stony Point. The vessel remained just out of range of any permanent gun emplacements.

The Vulture would have gone down river on Wednesday, September 20, 1780 to pick up André but since the tide was right he preferred to come north to Vulture by barge. He arrived about seven o'clock in the evening. Vulture was to be his base of operations and his mode of transportation back to New York.

Now Enters Joshua Hett Smith

Arnold had convinced a friend of his, Joshua Hett Smith, to act as his agent, claiming that he was conducting very important negotiations for the government. Smith was "a timorous, yet a prying, bustling sort of character, delighted to have a hand in weighty affairs, but devoid of the nerve to carry him with good assurance through their implication." I don't know who said that, but whoever it was, he himself lacked the nerve to call spades spades.



Belmont

He was a lawyer and country gentleman, hiring tenants to farm his extensive acres, and was quite well-off. He had been an agent for Arnold's predecessor, General Robert Howe. Smith had a nice house called Belmont on the west bank with a fine view of Haverstraw Bay, about two miles south of Stony Point. A few days before the 20th. Smith's wife and children had been sent to stay with her parents in Fishkill. Smith was to join them later.

No Show On the 20th

Arnold had given Smith a requisition to draw a light boat from the quartermaster at King's Ferry, but no boat was available there and Smith was left up-the-creek without a paddle or even a boat. No matter. As it turned out Smith was unable to persuade his tenant, Sam Cahoon [Colquhun] to row the boat he did not have. However, Smith did prevail upon Cahoon to ride to Arnold's headquarters at Robinson's house with a letter explaining what had happened. When Cahoon arrived at Beverley the general was sleeping, so Cahoon left the letter and rode back to Belmont, a round trip of 30 miles.

Meanwhile André, back at the Vulture, paced the deck until well into the morning and, of course, no one showed up. He gave up and wrote a letter to Clinton explaining that he would stay another day in hope of making contact, and that he

Spies, Traitors and Highwaymen

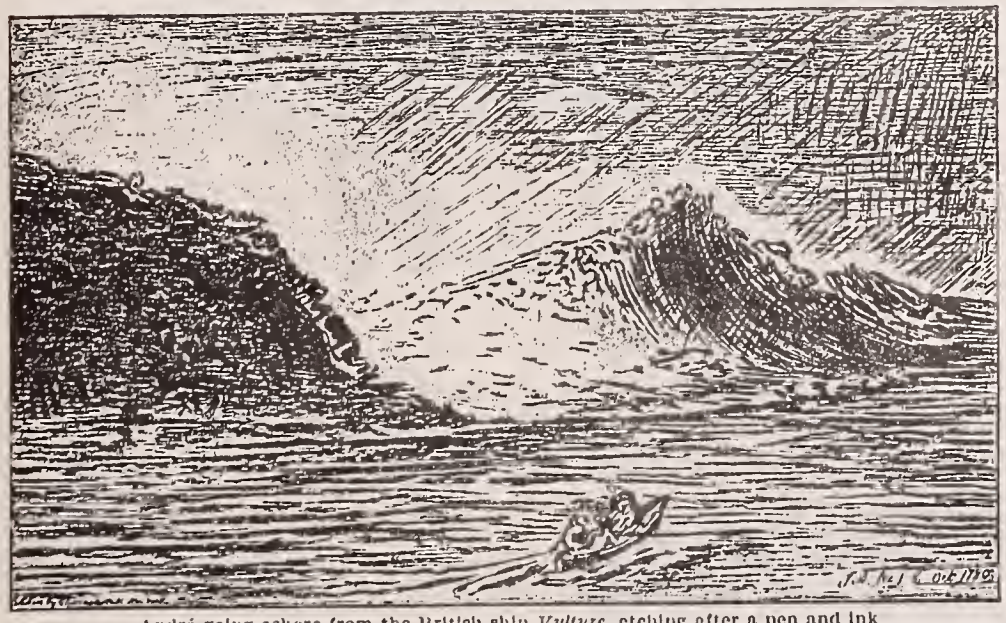
No Show on the 20th, continued

would feign illness to justify his longer stay to Captain Sutherland. Then he hit the sack. Isn't it amazing how he could write a letter on board a vessel, in the middle of a river in hostile territory and could get it delivered or at least on its way?

So now we have our whole cast waiting in the wings, hopeful that things will improve.

Progress On the 21st

On Thursday, the 21st, Arnold rode to Verplanck's Point, where he received a letter from André, saying that he would wait until the next night - that is Thursday night. (Another case of miraculous mail delivery to an enemy in the enemy's camp.) Arnold sent his barge upriver to get a boat, to bring it down and leave it in a creek near Smith's house. He then rode north to King's Ferry and down to Belmont to see that there was no hitch. Sam Cahoon still wanted no part of the rowing because he was pooped from his thirty-mile ride of yesterday and besides the boat was too big for one rower. Finally he agreed to get his brother Joseph to help. Joe, too, was reluctant. When Arnold promised them each 50 pounds of scarce flour and threatened them with arrest, they agreed.



André going ashore from the British ship *Vulture*, etching after a pen and ink sketch drawn by André while in prison

The boat with Smith and the two Cahoons glided across the water in the darkness, coming alongside Vulture about midnight. André, who had been waiting on deck wrapped in a long blue watch coat, clambered down into the boat. Thus, the Cahoons rowing, Smith and André crouched in the bow, they returned to the west bank, but now to a point two miles below Haverstraw at the foot of Long Clove Mountain. There they disembarked.

Talk, Delay, Trouble Brewing

In the dark, under the tall brooding firs, Arnold and André met for the first time. They talked at great length, probably discussing Arnold's fee and the terms of payment, the steps he would take to make West Point even more vulnerable to British attack and the timing of it. It may be that a tentative date was set for the Grand Stroke, probably September 30, 1780.

Near dawn André and Arnold went to the river bank, John expecting to be rowed back to Vulture which would carry him speedily to New York. The Cahoons demurred, saying that they were too exhausted to row another twelve miles. Sam was still worn out from his 30 mile ride the day before and the 12 mile row they had just finished. Besides, they didn't like to approach a British ship in daylight. What would people think if they were seen? I think the Cahoons were beginning to smell a rat; there was something fishy about this whole affair and they wanted out, pronto!

Cloak and Dagger

Spies, Traitors and Highwaymen

Progress On the 21st, continued

Since the Cahoons were adamant in their refusal, Arnold mounted his horse and appropriated for André the one ridden by Smith's negro servant. The two set off toward Belmont. On the way they were challenged by a Continental sentry in Haverstraw. André must certainly have known then that he had already violated one of Clinton's admonitions and was, in fact, behind the Continental lines.

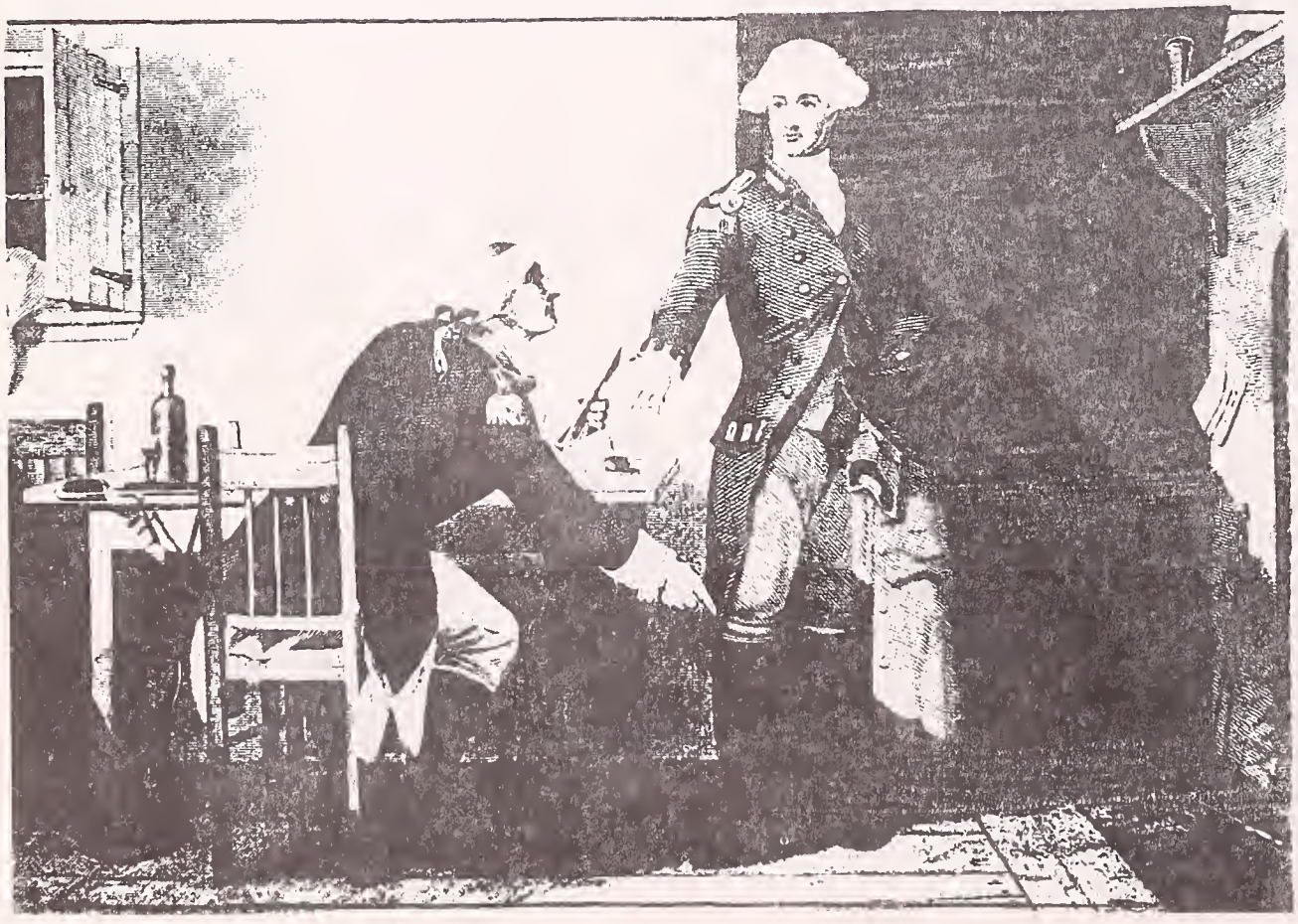
Smith, his servant and the two Cahoons rowed the boat north from Long Clove to a small creek near Belmont and hid it there. Smith joined Arnold and André soon after they had arrived at his house.

The Fickle Finger of Fate

Smith roused his servants to prepare breakfast and it was soon served in a spacious dining room overlooking Haverstraw Bay. There Vulture rode at anchor off Teller's Point. As they watched they could see puffs of smoke from the east bank and from Vulture, and then they could hear the cannon fire. It was evident that the vessel was being bombarded from Gallow's Point and was returning fire, briskly.

Colonel James [Henry] Livingston (this is the Major Livingston who was at Ft. Chambly when André was captured in 1775), irked by Vulture's arrogance and taunting presence had obtained some light artillery and had opened fire from new emplacements on Gallows Point. He had asked Arnold for heavier guns, but the General had delayed in complying with his request, for reasons now apparent to us. Impatient, Livingston had liberated something when someone was looking the other way. Vulture sustained several hits but returned fire vigorously. A shot from Vulture blew up the patriots' ammunition and silenced the guns. Rather than remain there as a wounded sitting duck, the vessel lifted anchor and raised sails, moving slowly down-river and out of sight. Some distance below Teller's Point the ship halted to lick and tend its real but minor wounds.

Imagine André's consternation when he saw his sure and safe refuge and transportation disappear. Under the circumstances he could be forgiven a pungent expletive and a feeling of foreboding about the the whole affair.



Smith complained of the ague (he had the sniffles from waiting in the boat) and went to bed. André and Arnold went upstairs to discuss more details.

There Benedict gave John a number of documents, including the original plans of the West Point defenses, paths of approach, distribution of forces to facilitate easy conquest, soft spots, the weak links in the chain across the Hudson. He wanted André to carry these to Clinton.

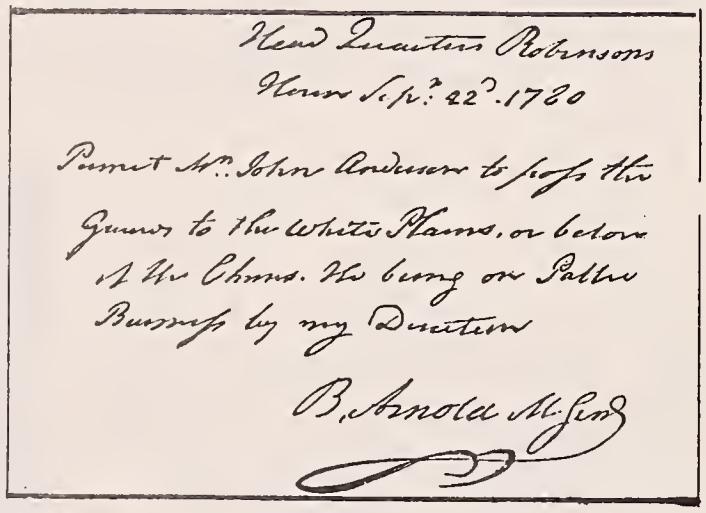
Spies, Traitors and Highwaymen

The Fickle Finger of Fate, continued

Arnold felt that these papers would be proof that he was keeping his end of the bargain. There were six sheets of paper. André placed three of them, folded to size, between the sole of his foot and his stocking on each foot, then pulled on his boots. Right. The second no-no had just gone down the tubes.

First Day of Flight

Later that afternoon of Friday, September 22, 1780, Vulture returned to its anchorage off Teller's Point, having made whatever emergency repairs were necessary. Captain Sutherland felt that he would be safe there until the patriots found other guns and more ammunition. André observed the vessel's return and requested that he be conducted to the ship that night. Arnold was now convinced that any approach to Vulture would be suspicious in view of the morning's events. The two finally agreed (or Arnold, top dog, crammed it down André's throat) that a return by horseback would be safer. The General gave André a pass permitting one John Anderson to travel to White Plains. He also gave Smith a pass for the same travel.


Head Quarters Robinsons
House Sep.r 22d. 1780
Permit Mr. John Anderson to pass the
Guards to the White Plains, or below
of the Chains. He being on Public
Business by my Direction
B. Arnold M. Genl

Arnold and Smith rode off to Stony Point. On the way, Arnold asked Smith to act as as André's guide on the overland trip and told him to find a Continental uniform for André. Later, Smith rode to Croton to borrow a uniform from a friend. Either the friend refused to lend it or didn't have it and Smith hustled back to Belmont. Since the Englishman was supposed to be a civilian merchant according to his pass, Smith rummaged in his old clothes and found a purple [claret] coat and a round hat. When André donned these clothes and accepted the pass, he violated the last two of Clinton's warnings.

He retained his un-marked waistcoat and his white-topped boots. With the blue watch coat over the purple outfit and wearing the round hat provided to him, he didn't look much like a soldier. It isn't conceivable that he did not realize that he was now at hazard, that one small mistake and he would be in deep dung. He had participated in some dumb stunts but he wasn't stupid.

At dusk John, Smith and Smith's servant mounted, André on a big bay horse with a Continental Army brand. They rode north to King's Ferry and crossed without incident. Colonel Livingston talked to them briefly but did not recognize André. They rode on toward Peekskill, passed it and turned east. At Crompond, eight miles from Verplanck's Point, a platoon of militia stopped them. The militia Captain, Ebenezer Foote, asked some questions and studied their passes, which he found to be in order. He advised them against traveling to White Plains at night, since the Cowboys were especially active south of the Croton River.

John and Joshua rode on a short distance and spent the night at the small farmhouse of Andreas Miller, who had recently been victimized by the raiders. The two riders slept in the same four-poster bed, fully clothed and restless. The servant probably slept with the horses, wherever that was.

Spies, Traitors and Highwaymen

Early Saturday, September 23, 1780.

The two men were up at dawn, roused the servant and set off, riding south for seven miles to Cat Hill, where they scrounged some breakfast [cornmeal mush] [soupaan] from an old lady, Sarah Churchill, who had just been robbed of all her supplies by the rapacious Cowboys. Here Smith and his servant turned north, leaving John to proceed alone. Smith told him it was only about 2 miles to White Plains; it was near 15. Since it was daylight there was little risk of being stopped by the Cowboys, according to Smith who was obviously anxious to dump this guy.

Smith and his servant rode north to Beverley, arriving about noon. He advised Arnold what had happened, argued some with the General's aides who did not like him, then rode north to Fishkill, to join his family at his in-laws' home. That evening Smith was at a special dinner at which Washington was the guest of honor, on his way to West Point.

Andre rode on south on the same road, past the sites of today's Chappaqua and Pleasantville. He encountered a country boy who told him that scouts (military or gangster?) were operating thereabouts. John turned then into the Tarrytown Road. He stopped at a farmhouse for directions and found he was four miles from Tarrytown.

And Smith was right. The Cowboys didn't bother him. But the Skinners did!

Downfall

André held his horse to a slow trot along the Tarrytown Road, passing the site of Sleepy Hollow, not yet immortalized by Washington Irving. Shortly after nine o'clock, three miles north of Tarrytown [half a mile north] [two miles south], just after clomping across a rickety plank bridge over Clark's Kill, three men stepped from the underbrush and accosted him. Paulding, Williams and Van Wirt, our merry Skinner highwaymen.

Four days before Paulding had escaped from a New York City prison and had, on his way, liberated a Hessian military overcoat. He was wearing that coat when he stuck his musket in André's chest and ordered him to dismount.

John, seeing that coat, assumed that Paulding was what the coat proclaimed him to be - a Hessian soldier, hireling of the British Crown. André announced that he was a British officer in a hurry to get to New York City on important business, but the Skinners believed what they saw, a civilian wearing rather grubby clothes, except for his boots. It's easier when everyone's wrong. André showed them the pass Arnold had provided. Of the three only John could read and he mistrusted what he read. The three rascals

Spies, Traitors and Highwaymen

Downfall, continued

talked it over under a hugh tulip tree, then decided to go ahead and rob this guy. They ordered John to strip, right down to his boots, which looked as if they'd bring a pretty price if they didn't fit one of them. When they found the papers under André's stockings they knew they had a tiger by the tail that they could not handle. They were still trying to make up their minds when André offered a large sum, delayed, for his freedom. This convinced them that the authorities should handle their prisoner, much as they would have liked to rob him of whatever he had, especially the boots.

André was allowed to don his clothes and to mount his horse. His arms were tied loosely and the three captors took turns leading the horse and watching the rider as they headed for the Continental Lines. The three turned him over to a colonial patrol under command of Lt. Colonel John Jameson, in charge of the outpost at North Castle. With him went their story of his capture.

Initial Custody

Several days earlier, before Vulture entered the picture, Arnold had instructed officers at outposts near the British Lines to be on the lookout for a John Anderson from New York and to pass him on to West Point when he appeared. Now Lt. Col. Jameson, as he studied André's pass and listened to the Skinners' story, thought that this must be that Anderson, but he was puzzled that Anderson was going south instead of north. Jameson felt that the signature on the pass was genuine (which of course it was). [Some historians said that Jameson did what he did because he was convinced the signature on the pass was a forgery.]

The contents of the papers bothered him. I think Jameson asked himself some pointed questions and decided to cover his ass both ways. He sent the captured documents, with a note, to Washington by messenger who hoped to find the General somewhere on the road from Hartford, coming west. When the messenger reached Danbury, he was advised that Washington had taken another route. The messenger rode back to North Castle for further instructions, the documents still in his saddle-bags.

Jameson wrote two letters to Arnold, one listing the documents taken from André and forwarded to Washington and another telling him what had happened. He sent Lt. Joshua Allen north with the letters, André and a four-man guard.

Shortly thereafter, Major Benjamin Tallmadge, second-in-command to Jameson at North Castle and a part of Washington's secret service organization, returned from patrol. Jameson told him what had happened and then it hit the fan! This was the hocus-pocus in high places that Tallmadge's agents had hinted at! Tallmadge, in a tight bind because he couldn't reveal his espionage job, prevailed upon Jameson to recall André but he insisted his two letters be delivered to Arnold. Anything else would be insubordination, he argued. Arnold was his superior officer, blah, blah, blah.

A rider on a fast horse was sent off to find the Allen-André party somewhere to the north. They were overtaken a few miles from North Castle [almost to Peekskill] [at Peekskill] [four miles from Peekskill]. Allen reversed his course and came pelting back to North Castle with André, four guards and two undelivered letters.

Spies, Traitors and Highwaymen

Initial Custody, continued

Early Sunday morning, Lt. Allen, a bit saddle-weary, set off again, this time alone, for Robinson's House, while the messenger who couldn't find Washington on Saturday went racing away toward West Point - looking for him.

André, who knew the jig was up, was escorted by a heavy guard, under Lt. King, to South Salem, headquarters of the Second Regiment, and fifteen miles east of the river.

Arnold's Flight

Arnold expected Washington for breakfast on Sunday morning, but the Chief, coming from Fishkill, had gone on to West Point for an inspection. However, he sent some of his staff on to Beverley, asking that breakfast go on without him. Benedict was eating with his staff and Washington's aides when Lt. Allen arrived, all asweat and somewhat disheveled from his long ride, and delivered the letters to Arnold.

As he read, he knew that the fat was in the fire and his ass in a sling, but he maintained his composure. Excusing himself, he went to the rear of the house, ordered a soldier to saddle a horse for him and to hold it at the rear stoop, and ordered another soldier to find his coxswain Larvey and tell him to report immediately at the landing.

Then he went upstairs to Peggy, still in bed with their baby boy. He told her what had happened and that she would be safe and kissed her and his son good-bye. Benedict ran down the back stairs, jumped on the waiting horse and galloped toward the landing. Just as he arrived he passed Larvey, panting heavily from his run on foot. Arnold sent his horse slithering down the wet river bank to the landing. Larvey and he jumped aboard the boat and they cast off.

Arnold told the crew that he must reach Vulture quickly on a matter of utmost importance to General Washington. He said that two gallons of rum awaited them for a fast row.

Arnold's Escape

The artist has short-changed him. He was entitled to eight oarsmen.

The crewmen earned the promised rum and as Arnold clambered over the side of Vulture he told them to come aboard to collect it. Once on board, they were seized and bound. The Vulture sailed down river. Captain Sutherland treated the oarsmen decently and when they reached New York he made a point of seeing that Sir Henry Clinton was aware of the circumstances. When Sir Henry heard of the shanghaied oarsmen, he ordered that they be released immediately. Honor among thieves! What happened to their boat? [The crewmen were given the choice of going with Arnold or returning to their posts. Two joined him and the others rowed away.] [The crewmen were all put ashore at Gallow's Point and the boat was confiscated.] [All of the crewmen were allowed to row away.] But what about the rum? Two gallons of it!

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Spies, Traitors and Highwaymen

Arnold's Flight, continued

At the right is an artist's conception of Arnold boarding Vulture drawn about 200 years after it happened. To my mind the artist has exaggerated the size and formality of the British ship. Arnold seems quite dapper and unruffled after all the dashing around. However, his head appears bowed, as if he now realized the enormity of what he has done and can never undo. There is no evidence here of his boat crew nor any hint as to how they were treated.

Washington Gets The News

General Washington, after inspecting the outer defenses of West Point and finding them in poor shape, was rowed down and across to Beverley, arriving about noon. Of course Arnold was gone and he had told no one but Peggy. Ostensibly he had gone to West Point and must have taken another route if the Chief had not passed him. George was freshening up for lunch when Jameson's messenger arrived with a letter and a packet of papers taken from André. No dummy, he! After initial shock, anger and sorrow, he sent Hamilton and James McHenry scurrying after Arnold in a vain attempt to catch him.

Fast horses and couriers were at a premium. Old George made fast decisions, proving his worth. Anthony Wayne was ordered to proceed immediately to West Point; he marched his men 16 miles in four hours at night and arrived ready to fight. Nathaniel Greene was directed to move his entire force to Stony Point. André was ordered from South Salem to West Pont, by a northerly route, under heavy guard of 100 dragoons commanded by Major Benjamin Tallmadge. Smith was rousted out of bed at Fishkill by French troops, arrested and hustled down river to West Point. Washington wrote a scathing rebuke to Lt. Colonel Jameson for his wishy-washy handling of the affair.

Unfortunately, George wasn't very smart in dealing with Arnold's wife. Peggy had him completely hood-winked with her faints, screams, tantrums, hysterical denial of everything. She had acting ability. A dummy,he!

André was pulled out of bed at midnight and made the long ride through the heavy rain to Beverley. Washington declined to see him when he arrived and he was quickly taken across river to West Point.

At West Point and afterwards, André and Smith were not allowed to communicate in any way. They were placed in barges and rowed down river to Stony Point, escorted on either side by other barges with heavily armed men. At Stony Point they were met by the omni-present Major Tallmadge and his 100 dragoons, who escorted them in another long ride south to Tappan. André was imprisoned in Maibie's Tavern, heavily guarded, but observing Washington's instructions that his room be decent and that he be treated with courtesy. Smith was held in the village church.

André's Interrogation and Trial

While lucky breaks were falling Arnold's way, John André lost at every roll of the dice. He was repeatedly interrogated and admitted most things except unsoldierly conduct and claimed that he should not be treated as a spy. Strangely, he did not

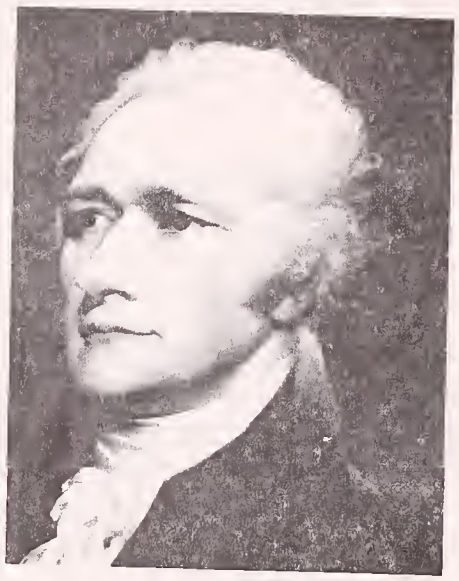
Spies, Traitors and Highwaymen

André's Interrogation and Trial, continued

seem to feel, at first, that he was in serious trouble, but it soon became apparent to him that he was, indeed, a goner. Arnold and Clinton wrote to Washington to convince him that André was not a spy, to no avail. Everyone that had contact with him admired his fortitude and behavior.

Perhaps this is best demonstrated by a quotation from Alexander Hamilton:

> "Everything that is amiable in virtue, in fortitude, in delicate sentiment and accomplished manners, pleads for him. I confess to you, I had the weakness to value the esteem of a dying man, because I reverenced his merit."



This is turgid prose, in the fashion of the times, but it is a declaration of feeling by a proud and loyal patriot.

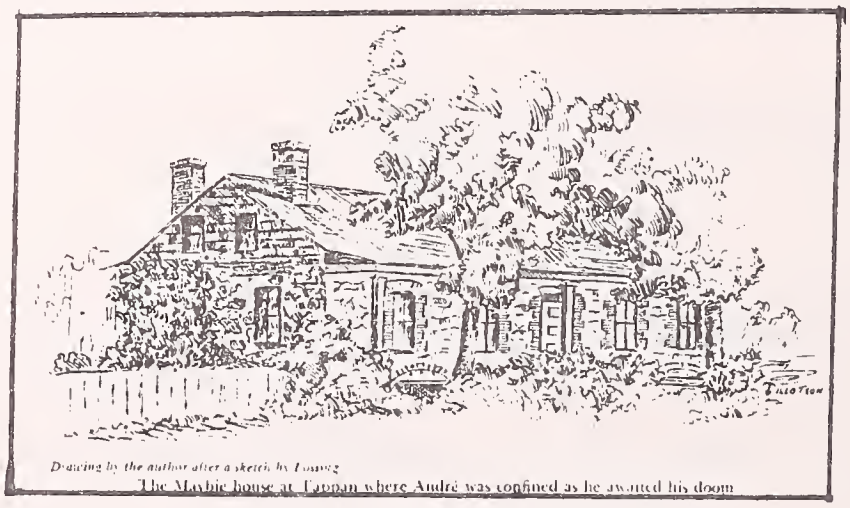
Clinton reminded Washington that André's execution might have dire consequences for prisoners being held by the British in New York and London. He offered to exchange any of them for André. Washington, acting through Hamilton, told Clinton that he would exchange André only for Arnold. Sir Henry declined, feeling that he could not do that with honor.

On September 29, 1780, in the old Dutch Church in Orangeville, N.J., André was tried by a Board of General Officers, with General Nathaniel Greene as President. These fourteen men found him guilty of spying and recommended that he be put to death. In spite of pleas by the British and Loyalist people, and by colonials as well, who thought only Arnold should pay that price, Washington stood firm for the death penalty, although he sympathized with the young man. Washington also denied André's request that he be shot rather than hanged, although André did not know that until he was brought to the gibbet.

Beat The Drum Slowly

Washington had originally set the time of execution as five o;clock in the afternoon of October 1, 1780, but it was postponed until noon the following day.

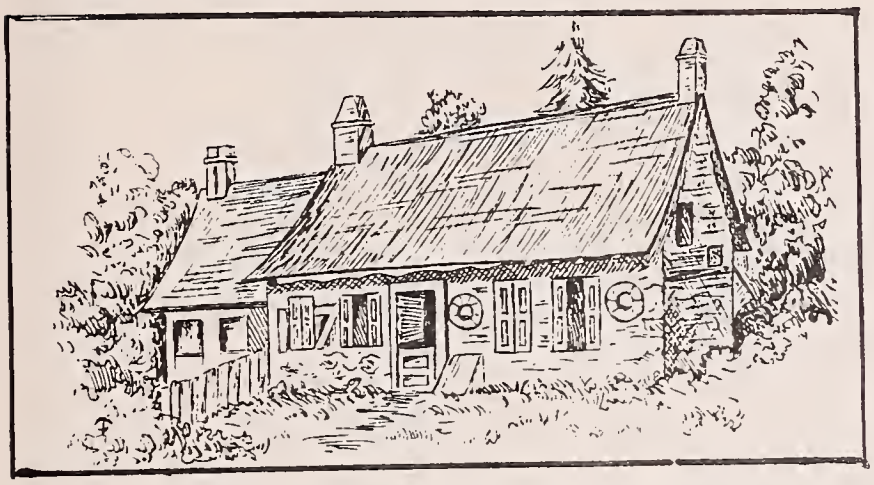
The place of execution was in the center of the Continental encampment, not far from the tavern in Tappan where André was held, on land owned by Mr. Maibie, the tavern keeper.



Maibie's Tavern At Tappan
[Maybie] [Mabie]

Spies, Traitors and Highwaymen

Beat The Drum Slowly, continued



The John DeWindt House at Tappan
Washington's Headquarters

It was visible from Washington's headquarters but all curtains were drawn on that day, on the General's specific order.

There were stories that a cross-piece had been laid across the crotches of two apple trees, but the only illustrations I have seen depict a carpentered gibbet. There were many witnesses, military and civilian, troops in parade order in a hollow square.

On the morning of October 2, 1780, André was given a good breakfast from General Washington's table, which he ate with evident relish.

André shaved carefully and dressed in a new uniform which he had requested and Sir Henry had sent through the lines with John's servant. Just before noon, he donned his hat and said to the guards, "Ready when you are, gentlemen."

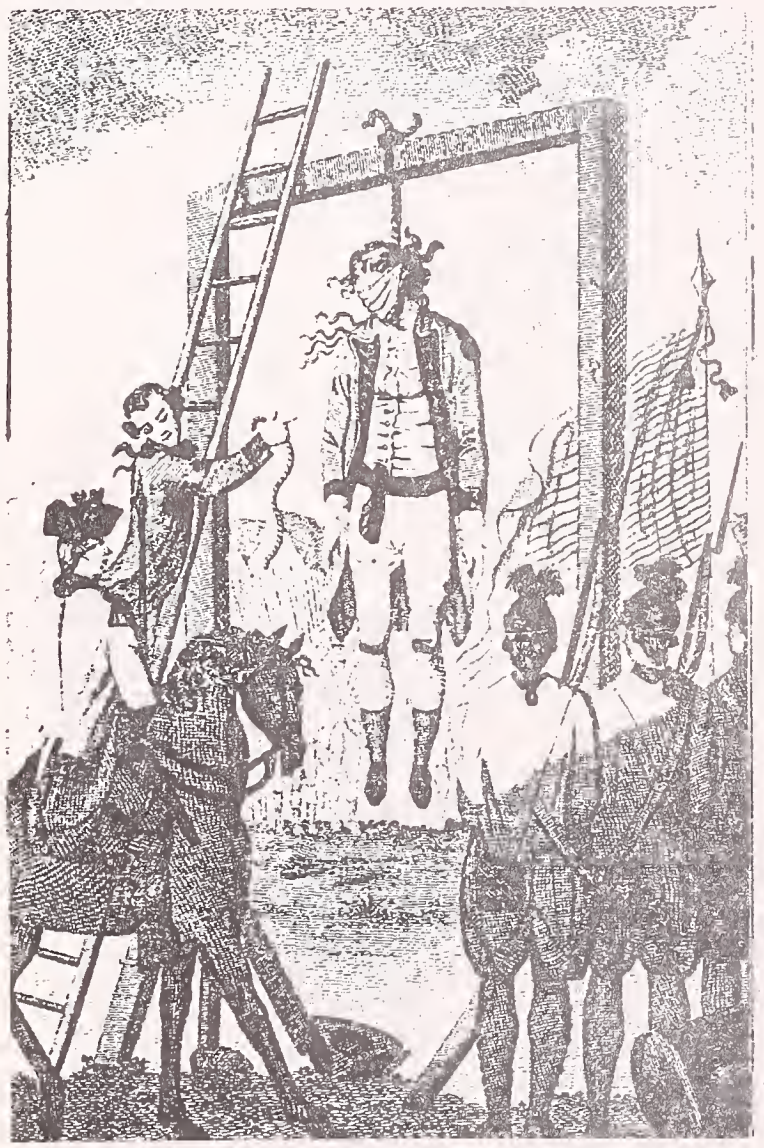
He was escorted by junior officers at each elbow, marching slowly between double rows of soldiers, accompanied by mournful music. He strode firmly, smiling at faces he recognized, complimenting the fifers. The picture at the right shows him when he first sighted the gibbet, dismayed and disgusted.

The executioner was a loyalist prisoner named Strickland, who had been given his freedom for taking the job. He had blackened his face to mask his identity and was nervous and jittery throughout. A black wooden coffin was placed in the bed of a baggage wagon and the horse hitched to it was guided under the scaffold so as to place the coffin under the dangling noose.

Spies, Traitors and Highwaymen

Beat The Drum Slowly, continued

André gave a gritty performance, after expressing his surprise and consternation at seeing that he was not to be shot. He was led to the wagon, climbed into it and onto the coffin. There he removed his hat and tossed it to the ground, then loosened the stock at his throat. Strickland fumbled with the noose so André took it from him and placed it around his own neck, checking to be sure the knot was just below his ear.



The hangman offered to blindfold him with a rag he was holding. André brushed it aside and drew a clean white handkerchief from his pocket, folded it properly and blindfolded himself. A witnessing officer said that his arms should be tied. John heard, took another handkerchief from his pocket and offered it to Strickland, who tied his arms loosely behind his back.

The order for execution was read by Adjutant General Scammel. André asked the officers present to observe that he died bravely. A signal was given, the horse was lashed and spun the wagon away. Witnesses said that the first long swing broke his neck. The body was allowed to hang for half an hour.

Then it was cut down, the clothes were removed by John's servant and John was buried very near the spot where he died.

The illustration I have used was the clearest I could find that would reproduce well, but it has its deficiencies. For example, Andre's arms are not tied. I don't get the significance of the clown on the ladder pointing to something. If he is the executioner, where is his make-up?

André Honored In England

When the news of André's execution and the pertinent circumstances reached England, there was a loud public furor. The English people, believing what the British press told them, felt that the Colonials had acted meanly, without compassion, ignobly. The famous dramatist Ben Jonson declared, "I am willing to love all mankind, excepting an American."

Shortly thereafter, a cenotaph was erected in Westminster Abbey by the British people. The memorial is in the form of a sarcaphagus showing representations of his last days.

Spies, Traitors and Highwaymen

André Honored in England, continued

Above it, Britannia mourns her loss. It is inscribed:

Sacred to the memory
of
Major John André
who, raised by his Merit, at an early Period
of his Life, to the Rank of
Adjutant-General of the British Forces
in America
and, employed in an important but hazardous Enterprise
Fell a Sacrifice
to his
Zeal for his King and Country
on the 2nd of October, 1780, aged 29.
Universally beloved and esteemed by the Army
in which he served and lamented even
by his Foes.
His Gracious Sovereign
King George III
had caused the Monument to be erected

In 1821, under the direction of the British Consul in New York City, André's remains were exhumed and taken to England aboard a British man-o-war. They were placed, with appropriate ceremonies, with his cenotaph in the Poets' Corner of Westminster Abbey.

The Fate of Joshua Hett Smith

Joshua Hett Smith was tried soon after André's execution. He defended himself well and skillfully. After four weeks of hearings he was acquitted of being a traitor, since no one could prove that he had fore-knowledge of Arnold's intentions. He was freed, but was arrested immediately and jailed on the charge of being a Tory. One fine day, several weeks later, he got his jailors drunk and escaped wearing a red silk dress. When he reached New York City, the British sent him to England. There he published a Narrative describing the whole affair from the viewpoint of Joshua Hett Smith.

In 1802 he returned to America and published a biography of Arnold which was a best-seller.

Rewards For Cautious Highwaymen

John Paulding, the tall highwaymen, was among the witnesses to the execution of John André. Later he wrote this note, which was preserved.

> "I took André, the 23 of September, 1780 and I seen him hung,
> October 2, 1780. For my children."

So he wasn't illiterate, but his grammar was defective.

The three highwaymen were allowed to keep André's boots, watch and saddle. The horse with the Continental Army brand may have been embarrassing to them. I wonder how they split this stuff? The boots wouldn't fit Paulding.

Spies, Traitors and Highwaymen

Rewards For Cautious Highwaymen, continued

General Washington made a point of thanking John Paulding, David Williams and Isaac Van Wirt personally. [General Washington invit- Paulding, Williams and Van Wirt to have dinner with him.]

A few years later Congress voted a silver [gold] medal and a $200 annual pension to each of the three.

In 1817 the three applied to Congress to have their pensions increased. Congress denied their applications, influenced to a large extent by the efforts of Benjamin Tallmadge, our U.S. spy friend, who thought they were a bunch of bums, in 1780 and 1817 as well.

Later Arnold

History books recite Benedict Arnold's British Army services during the remainder of the Revolutionary War, including the conception and execution of a daring raid into Connecticut to destroy munitions. You will remember he had been the leader on the other side under similar circumstances a few years earlier. During this raid public buildings were put to the torch in New London, endearing him even more to his old neighbors.

Thomas Jefferson, as Governor of Virginia, offered a reward of 5000 guineas in gold for Arnold's capture. Washington ordered Lafayette to hang him summarily when (?) he was captured. And throughout the nation men were saying that, if they captured Arnold, they would cut off his left leg, wounded at Quebec and Saratoga,bury it with full honors and then hang the rest on a gibbet.

While there is no monument in the world to Benedict Arnold, there is a stone on the Saratoga battlefield, a Monument To A Wounded Leg, an empty boot in granite. So someone with a sense of humor or a bitter undying hatred thought some small recognition, positive or negative, was appropriate.

In Norwich, Connecticut, Arnold's birthplace, angry citizens destroyed the markers on the graves of his father and older brother, to remove all indication of the name of Benedict Arnold. These would have been Benedict III and Benedict IV. They were good haters, in Norwich!

Spies, Traitors and Highwaymen

Later Arnold, continued

Peggy and Benedict went to England in January, 1782 and established themselves in fashionable Partman Square, while he tried to spur Parliament into further action in America under his command. The Arnolds were not popular with the British people. No longer an American, Arnold was never accepted as an Englishman.

In 1785 Arnold emigrated to Canada and settled in St. Johns, New Brunswick, where he lived for seven very active years. Unpopular here too, he sold out and was back in England in 1792. He fought a bloodless duel with Lord Lauderdale over what he thought were imputations as to his character (which they were). He continued to function in a variety of endeavors, usually in trouble or looking for it. The Crown, however, treated him well, granting him, Peggy and each of their sons life pensions. He was also granted 13,000 acres of land in Upper Canada. For his treason he received £6315.

Arnold died June 4, 1801 in London from "dropsy and a disease of the lungs." He was interred in the crypt of the Church of St. Mary's, Battersea. No monument was erected. When the church was renovated a century later, Arnold's bones were exhumed and reburied with the remains of hundreds of others in a jumbled, unmarked mass grave.

Peggy Shippen Arnold lived long enough to pay all of Benedict's debts. Included in Arnold's will was a substantial legacy to John Page, age 14. This was Peggy's first knowledge (and mine) of Benedict's illegitimate child, born in Canada and evidently sired by him when he went first to New Brunswick without Peggy.

Peggy honored her husband's will to the letter, proudly. When she died on August 24, 1804 of cancer of the uterus, she was 44. Among her personal possessions her children found a gold locket which, when opened, was found to hold a small lock of John André's hair.

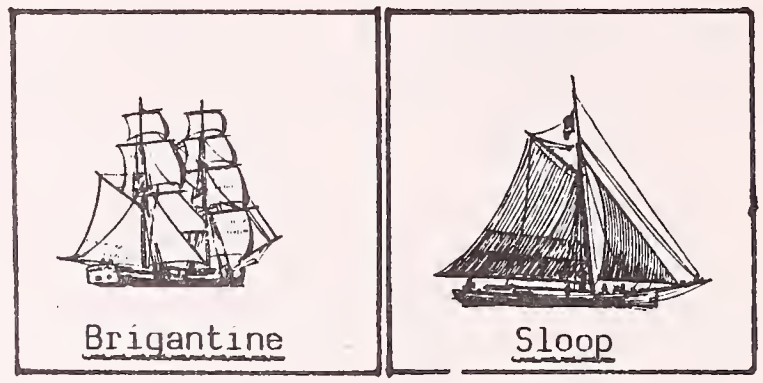
Peggy and Benedict had four sons, all of whom served in the British Army. One became a Lieutenant General. A great grandson of Arnold's was a British Major General in World War I.

A Pen and Ink Self-portrait by
John André, Drawn
on the Day Before His Execution

Another Sea-faring Ingersoll

Oh! For The Life Of A Sailor!

Jonathan Ingersoll (129 S - Chart E - 6th Generation was born April 10, 1747 at Ipswich, Mass., and died there November 20, 1817. He was a Master Mariner and served during the Revolution under Letters of Marque as Commander of the sloop-of-war Packet in 1778 and of the brigantine John in 1779. He married, first, Sarah Lord in 1770 and, second, Martha Haskell in 1774. He had six children, one by his first wife, five by his second. Only one survivied him.

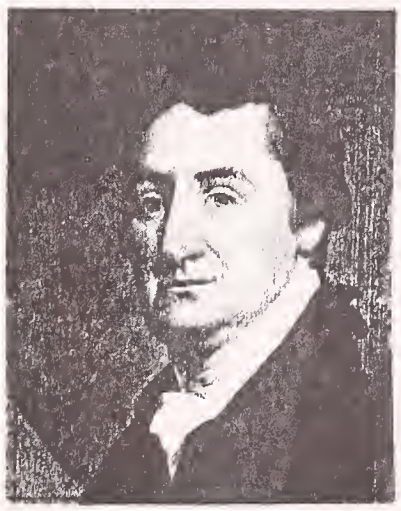


Brigantine

Sloop

After the Revolution, Jonathan commanded ships for Elias Hasket Derby, the merchant shipping tycoon of Salem. In 1784 he sailed on assignment to the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa. On the return voyage north diagonally across the Atlantic, the lookout spotted a small boat rising and falling in the mid-ocean swells. Heaving to, Jonathan's ship rescued two men from the boat. They were found to be the Master and Mate of the English schooner Amity whose crew had mutinied and cast these officers adrift. The rescued men were warmed, fed, comforted and taken home by Jonathan as guests of his ship.

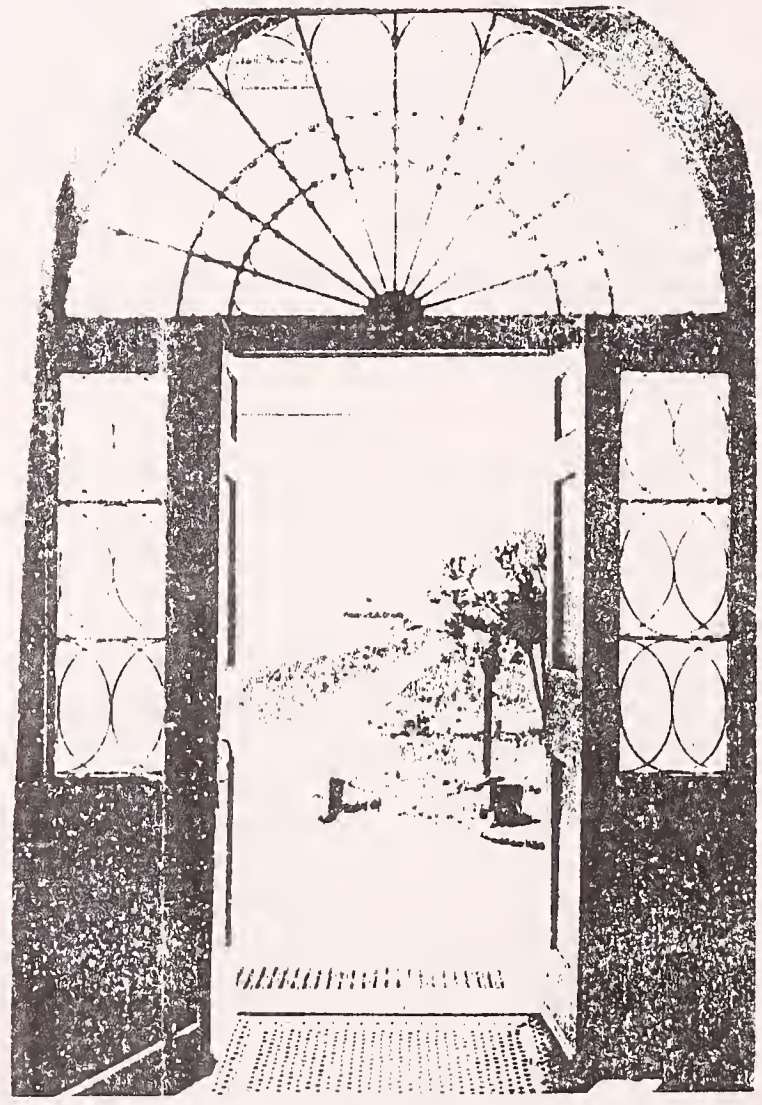
Derby Day



E.H. Derby

Once in Salem the two men were entertained while awaiting word of a ship bound for England. One day they were sitting in Mr. Derby's counting room in Derby Street which had a commanding view of Derby's Wharf and of the ocean approaches to the harbor. The Master of the Amity was idly watching the harbor traffic through a glass when, in the distance, down by Baker's Island, he spied his own ship Amity standing up the bay! The mutineers were bringing their prize to Salem, hoping to sell it there!

Apprised of the situation, Mr. Derby ordered two small cannon to be mounted on a ship at his wharf, ready to sail, crew on board. He and the two Englishmen boarded the ship, lines were cast off, sails were set to catch an afternoon breeze and they proceeded smartly in the direction of the unsuspecting mutineers.



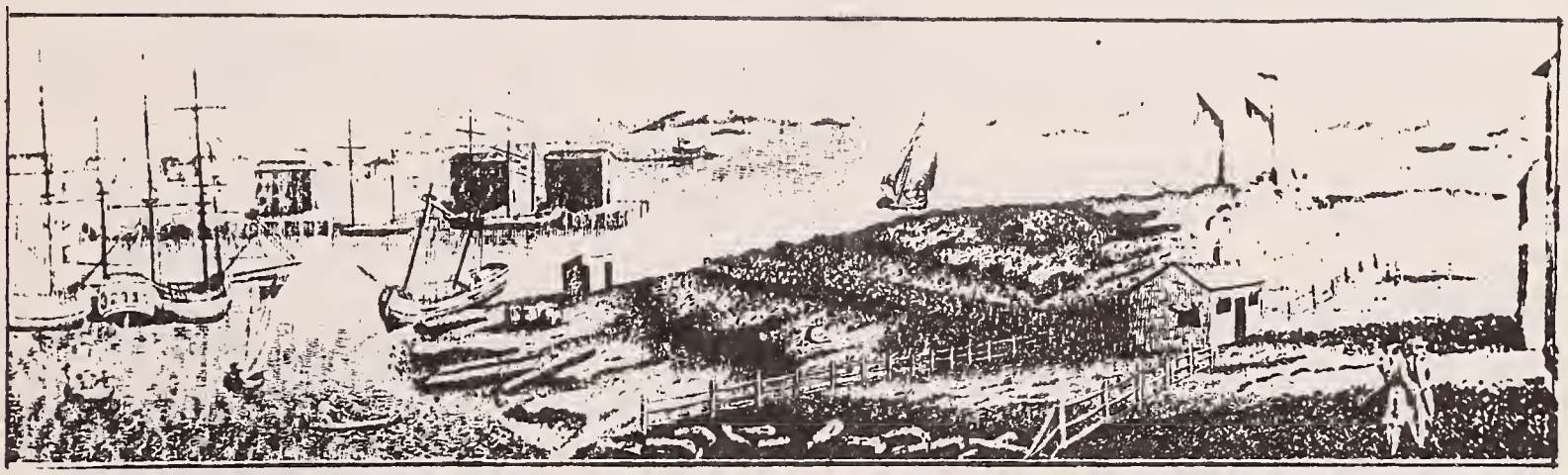
Derby Wharf seen from the front doorway of the Salem Custom House.

Another Sea-faring Ingersoll

Derby Day, continued

They threatened the unarmed Amity with their cannon, boarded it, arrested the mutineers and placed them in irons. And the Master and the Mate were once more treading their own quarter-deck, commanding a crew of borrowed sailors.

Can you imagine the chagrin, consternation, rage and despair of the mutineers when they recognized their cast-away officers? They must have been thinking, "Of all the places in this whole wide world, why in the hell did we have to come here?"



This is a view of Salem harbor and its wharves at just about the time of the Amity rescue.

Bumbershoot Heirloom

A hundred years later Jonathan's descendants still had many mementos of his voyages, including a queer, green, pongee umbrella with whale-bone ribs which he used on hot days in tropical waters to shield himself from the fierce glare of the sun beating down relentlessly on the ship's deck.

Ingersoll, Gilbert and Skilton Relationships

Introduction

There are interesting aspects of the relationships among members of the Ingersoll, Gilbert and Skilton families. These are described briefly here and they are diagrammed on a chart following the text.

Margaret Ingersoll (218 S - No Chart - 7th Generation)

Margaret, the ggggggrand-daughter of Richard of Salem, was born August 12, 1798 at Rupert, Vt. and died December 7, 1878 at Pittsford, Vt. She was a paternal aunt of Robert Green Ingersoll. On September 18, 1825 she married Simeon Gilbert of Pittsford. Mrs. Ingersoll was a lady of uncommon character and attainments. She and Simeon had nine children, seven sons and two daughters. Four of the sons were clergymen, one was a lawyer and two were businessmen.

Ebenezer Dwight Gilbert (218iii S - No Chart - 8th Generation) was the third child and the third son of Margaret and Simeon, born September 27, 1829 at Pittsford. He died July 15, 1879 in New York City. In 1852 he married, as her second husband, Margaret Ruth (Ingersoll) Porter (315 S - No Chart - 8th Generation). Margaret Ruth was 11 years older than Ebenezer and was his first cousin, the daughter of his mother's elder brother. It would be helpful to refer to the chart. Margaret Ruth was born July 11, 1818 at Hebron, N.Y. and died March 14, 1904 at New Hampton, Iowa. She had married, first, Edward Jefferson Pate, who died in 1848. Ebenezer and Margaret had one child.

Margaret Gilbert (315v S - No Chart - 9th Generation), for whom we have no birth date or place. She was married in New York City by Henry Ward Beecher, to Charles Stephenson. Margaret died at sea, returning from Bogata, Colombia. We do not know why she was in Colombia nor the circumstances of her death.

Nathaniel Porter Gilbert (218iv S - No Chart - 8th Generation, the fourth child and the fourth son of Margaret and Simeon Gilbert, was born February 26, 1831 and died July 2, 1876. He married Mary Perkins of Castleton, Vt., date unknown. During the Civil War, Nathaniel and Mary went to Santiago, Chile and established the first Protestant Spanish language church in that city. They had one child during their stay in Santiago. She was still a tot when they returned to Vermont after 11 years in Chile.

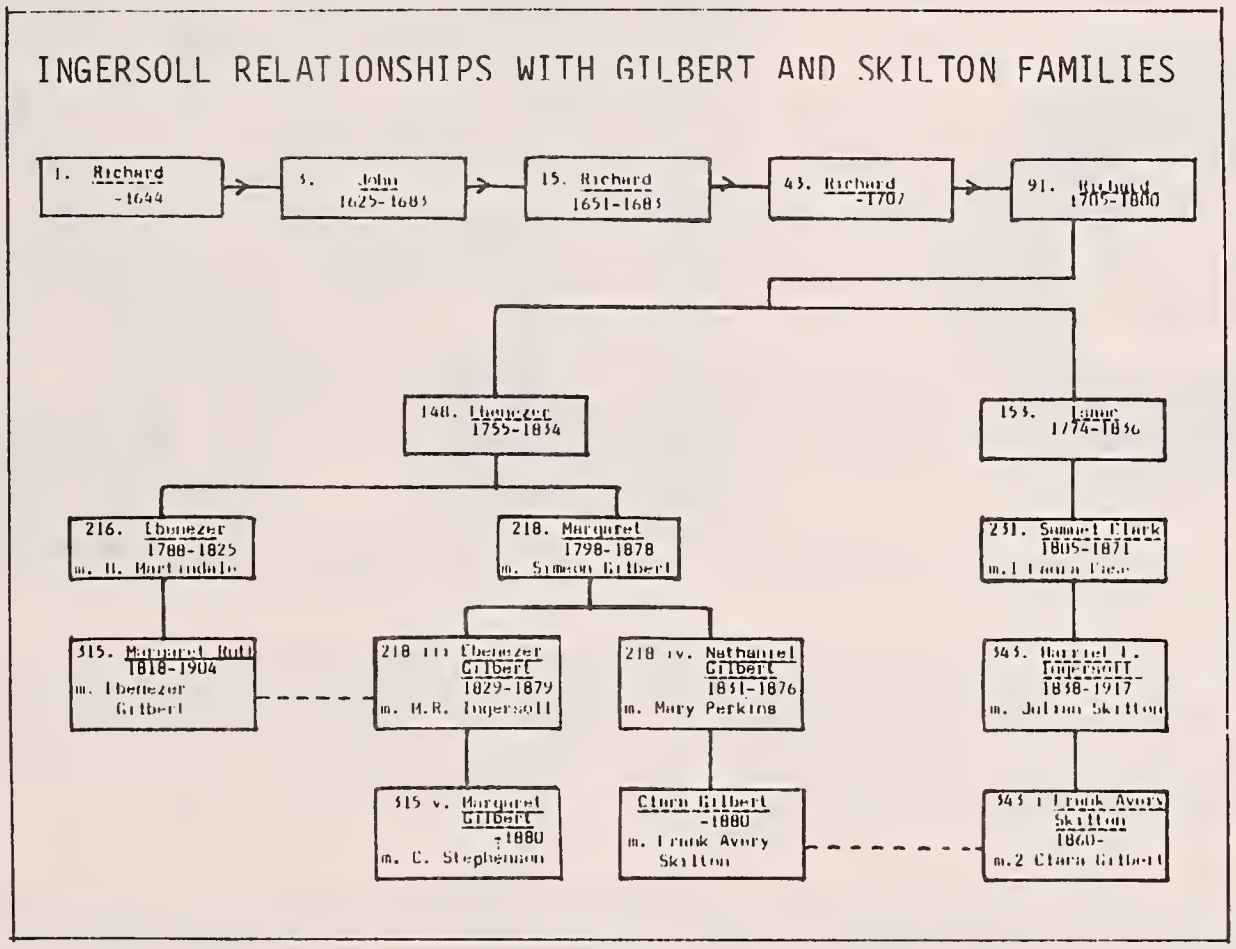
Clara Gilbert received a degree from Columbia and taught in Rye, New York and in Brooklyn. On May 12, 1917 she married, as his second wife, Frank Avery Skilton of Auburn, N.Y. who was the eldest child of Harriet Euphrasia (Ingersoll) and Julius Augustus Skilton.

Harriet (Hattie) Euphrasia Ingersoll (343 S - No Chart - 8th Generation) was a rather distant cousin of Margaret Ingersoll (218 S). Harriet was born September 3, 1838 at Cazanovia, N.Y. and died there in 1917. She married Dr. Julian Augustus Skilton, a medical doctor who entered the U.S. Consular Service.

Ingersoll, Gilbert and Skilton Relationships

Harriet (Hattie) Euphrasia Ingersoll, continued

Frank Avery Skilton (343i S - No Chart - 9th Generation) was born February 13, 1860 in Albany, N.Y. He married, first, Florence E. Hadger, who died in 1911. On May 12, 1917 he married Clara Gilbert (above). Frank was a prominent lawyer in Auburn, N.Y. At the time of their marriage Frank was 57, Clara was 50. No issue.



Odd Oddments

William Ingersoll, Jr. (102 S - No Chart - 6th Generation)

William was born October 12, 1779 in Addison, Me. and died May 6, 1858 in Columbia, Me. He married Susanna Shaw of Massachusetts on June 4, 1804. They had sixteen children. The six oldest children had their portraits painted by Charles Dundas of England. William must have run out of funds before he ran out of children.

Samuel Ingersoll (11 S - Charts D&F - 3rd Generation)

Samuel was born in Falmouth about 1654 and died after 1733 in Gloucester. His wife Judith brought 5 children to baptism on June 10, 1694 in Charlestown, Mass. Their ages were 1 to 10 and Judith was monstrously pregnant with her sixth child, who was born 6 days later. She had a little more trouble with Samuel himself, however. He wasn't baptized until July 12, 1696.

Some Tangled But Interesting Ingersoll Relationships

Richard Warren of London, England and Plymouth, Massachusetts

Richard Warren, a prosperous London merchant, was a passenger on the 1620 voyage of the Mayflower to Plymouth. He was a signer of the Mayflower Compact, along with

Wiswell ancestors Stephen Hopkins, Thomas Rogers and William Brewster. Richard came alone, leaving his wife Elizabeth and daughters Mary, Ann, Sarah, Elizabeth and Abigail in London. They joined him in Plymouth in 1623, arriving on the "Anna" along with Nicholas Snow, who will be introduced later in these papers. Two Warren sons, Nathaniel and Joseph, were born in Plymouth.

Warren was a very respected member of the Pilgrim community. He joined with Miles Standish on several of his expeditions. He was a member of a ten-man committee appointed to select a place for permanent settlement.

A chart presented at the conclusion of this segment demonstrates the descent from Richard to Ruth Church, in the fourth generation, and her introduction, together with that of her daughter, into the Ingersoll family.

Two other descendants of Richard Warren mentioned in this archive are Dr. Joseph Warren, the dead hero of Bunker Hill, and Ulysses S. Grant, the 18th President of the United States:

Dr. Joseph Warren

Ulysses Grant

Some Tangled But Interesting Ingersoll Relationships

David Ingersoll, (13 W), continued.

He was a man of considerable enterprise, a captain of militia, and was at one time at variance with Robert Livingston of Livingston Manor in New York. Livingston referred to David in writing as "that wicked varlet David Engersoll" - his spelling. John Conrad Weiser, a direct ancestor of your not-so-humble scrivener, was a bitter enemy of Livingston after 1710. John Conrad was a little the older, but it is interesting to speculate whether or not David and John Conrad ever met in an effort to find some way to embarrass Livingston.

David was not always a good business man and in 1755 all of his assets were taken from him to satisfy his creditors. Some unspecified irregularities (cover up double-talk if I ever heard it) regarding wolf scalps resulted in his loss of public office and disqualification from holding any official position in the future. At one time he owned about 5000 acres of land, so he must have been pretty well strung out when his creditors clobbered him.

David married Lydia Child of Springfield on March 13, 1720. See above. Lydia, 14, was the daughter of Ruth Child who would become the third wife of David's father. Lydia and David had only one child, William.

Note that David and Lydia were married two months before the marriage of their parents, Thomas and Ruth. Interesting, eh?

William Ingersoll (26 W - Chart J - 4th Generation) was born April 1, 1724. He married his cousin Lydia Ingersoll, daughter of William's uncle Moses. William died August 10, 1815, Lydia on June 2, 1804. They had eleven children, all of whom were descended from Richard Warren of the Mayflower through their mother and grandmother.

George Ingersoll (296 W - No Chart - 7th Generation), a great-grandson of William and Lydia, was born February 5, 1819 and died March 30, 1912 at Marshall, Michigan. He was married three times, his third wife being Margaret Louise Ingersoll, a great, great, great granddaughter of the original John Ingersoll of Huntington. George and his first wife had no children, but he had three by his second wife, and three by Margaret Louise.

Margaret Ingersoll (406 W - No Chart - 7th Generation) was born October 2, 1834 at Hunter, N.Y. and died February 10, 1924 at Hudson, N.Y. In March, 1866, she married, as his second wife, Van Rensselaer Gray (1824-1899). They had a daughter, Adelaide Ingersoll Gray (406 ii W - No Chart -8th Generation) who married John Clark Moore. They had a son Van Rensselaer Gray Moore (406 ii b W - No Chart - 9th Generation) who was a lieutenant in the United States Army Expedition to Eastern Siberia to protect White Russian and American interests during the closing days of the Russian Revolution. While there, in Vladivostok, in July, 1921, he married Madia Svetkova.

Some Tangled But Interesting Ingersoll Relationships

Ruth (Church) (Maddock) (Child) Ingersoll was born January 13, 1670, the daughter of Caleb and Joanna (Sprague) Church. Her paternal grandparents were Richard Church and Elizabeth (Warren) Church, who was the daughter of Richard Warren.

Ruth married, first, one John Maddock, and second, Joseph Child of Watertown. They had a child, Lydia, who was born June 2, 1706.

Joseph Child died sometime before 1720 and Ruth married Thomas Ingersoll (8 W - see below), on May 17, 1720. She was his third wife, he her third husband. If at first you don't succeed, try, try again.

The Ingersolls of Westfield and Warren Descendants

Thomas Ingersoll (8 W - Chart J - 2nd Generation) was born March 28, 1668, at Westfield, Mass., a son of the original John Ingersoll of Westfield. On July 22, 1672, Thomas married Sarah Ashley. They had five children: Thomas, Moses, Miriam, David and Eleanor. Sarah died in 1704, shortly after the birth of Eleanor.

Thomas married, second, on January 21, 1708, Abigail (Blakeman) Dickenson, widow of Hezekiah Dickenson. She died March 30, 1719, without issue. Thomas married as his third wife, Ruth (Church) Child, the widow of Joseph Child, on May 17, 1720.

Thomas Ingersoll (11 W - Chart J - 3rd Generation), son of Thomas and Sarah, brother of Moses (12 W) and David (13 W), was born at Westfield, Mass. on November 27, 1692, in "Ingersoll House". He inherited this house from his father and lived in it all his life. He was commissioned a magistrate for Hampshire County by George I, was elected Westfield selectman twelve times and was a representative at the General Court in Boston. He married Sarah Dewey, probably in 1714.

On an unknown date, Esquire Thomas found Greylock a well-known Indian chief and warrior, lurking about his estate. Now Greylock was cunning, cruel and murderous and had long been at odds with Thomas. In observing the Indian, Thomas believed that he was trying to surprise and attack Mrs. Ingersoll in his presumed absence. He shot and killed the Indian. Period.

Thomas and Sarah had eight children. He died October 9, 1748, she on April 30, 1778.

Moses Ingersoll (12 W - Chart J - 3rd Generation), son of Thomas and brother of Thomas (11 W) and David (13 W), was born February 10, 1694 at Westfield, Mass. and died at Great Barrington, shortly before May 23, 1751, when an inventory of his estate was filed with the Probate Court. He married Catherine Van Slyke, who died March 9,1772.

Moses was an inn-keeper in Great Barrington, a large land holder, in comfortable circumstances, a prominent man among the settlers, the Parish Treasurer.

He and Catherine had eight children. The fourth was Lydia Ingersoll, born October 1, 1727, who married her cousin William, son of her uncle David. Lydia's younger brother, Peter, was the direct ancestor of the five children of Eben D. Wiswell, Sr. and Bernice (Ingersoll) Wiswell.

David Ingersoll (13 W - Chart J - 3rd Generation) was born September 30, 1699 at Westfield, the son of Thomas (8 W) and brother of Thomas (11 W) and Moses (12 W).

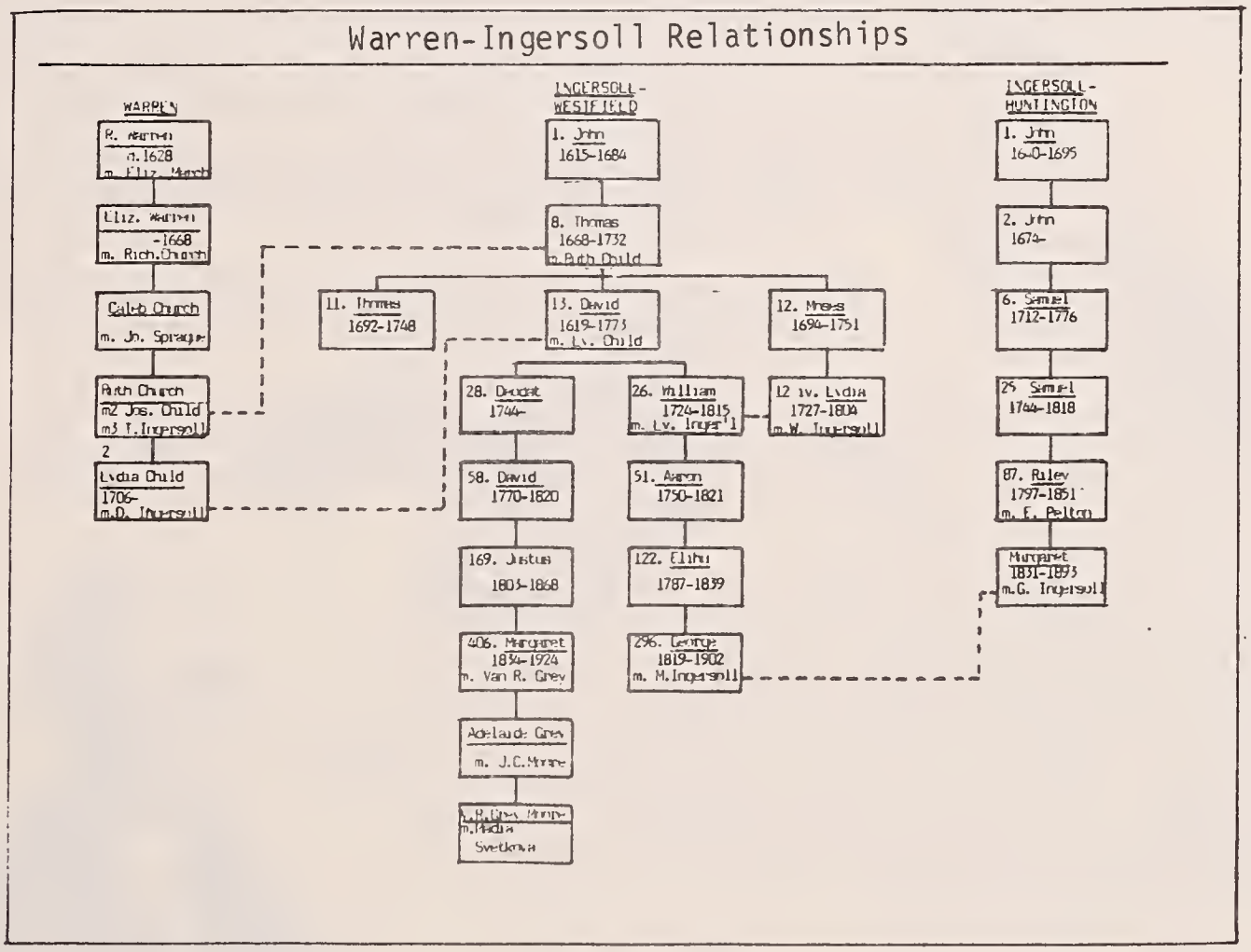
Some Tangled But Interesting Ingersoll Relationships

The Ingersolls of Huntington

Margaret Louise Ingersoll (87iii H - No Chart - 6th Generation), the ggg granddaughter of John Ingersoll of Huntington, was born December 25, 1831 at Marshall, Michigan. She was the daughter of Judge Riley Ingersoll (87 H) and Emma (Pelton) Ingersoll. On December 16, 1857, she married Judge George Ingersoll (1819-1912) (296 W - No Chart - 7th Generation, a descendant of John Ingersoll of Westfield, as his third wife. They had three children.

Conclusion

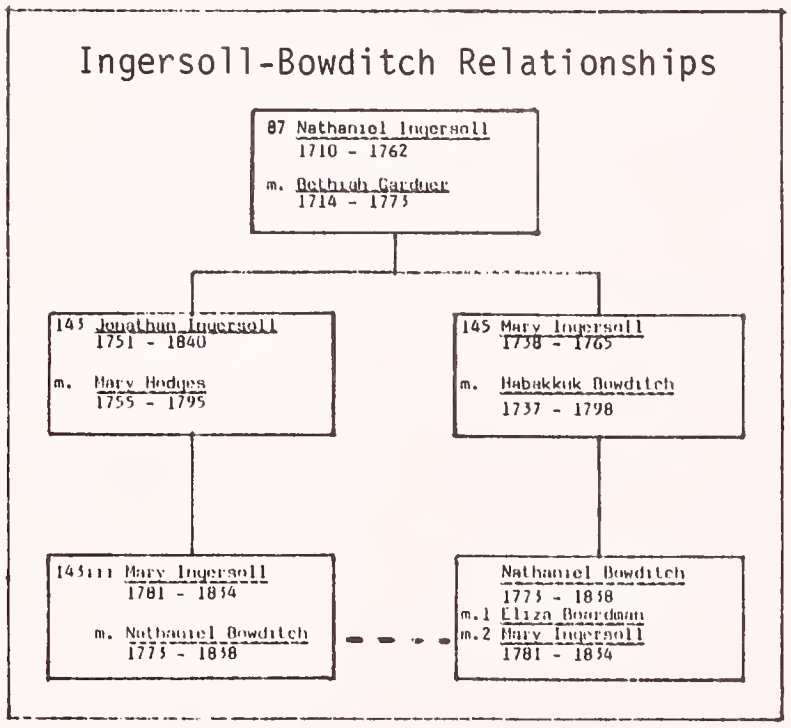
I think I have demonstrated quite clearly the reader's need for graphic display in following this labyrinth. I hope the chart helps.



Master of Marine Mathematics

Ingersoll Meets Bowditch - Object: Matrimony

Mary Ingersoll (143iii S - Chart E - 7th Generation) was born December 4, 1781 and died April 17, 1834. On October 28, 1800 she married Nathaniel Bowditch as his second wife. Nathaniel was the fourth child of Mary's aunt, Mary Ingersoll Bowditch. The chart provided below illustrates the relationship between the two families.



Nathaniel Bowditch (145iv S - No Chart - 7th Generation) was born at Salem, Mass. on March 26, 1773 and died in Boston on March 16, 1838. His youth was spent in abject poverty; he had no formal schooling beyond the age of 10. In his early teens Nathaniel was a clerk in a ship chandlery and thus began his life-long association with things maritime. While he was otherwise unlucky in his early days he was extremely fortunate to have access to a fine scientific library which a Revolutionary privateer had found on a captured prize and brought home to Salem.

He taught himself Latin and mathematics in order to read and understand some of the obscure texts.

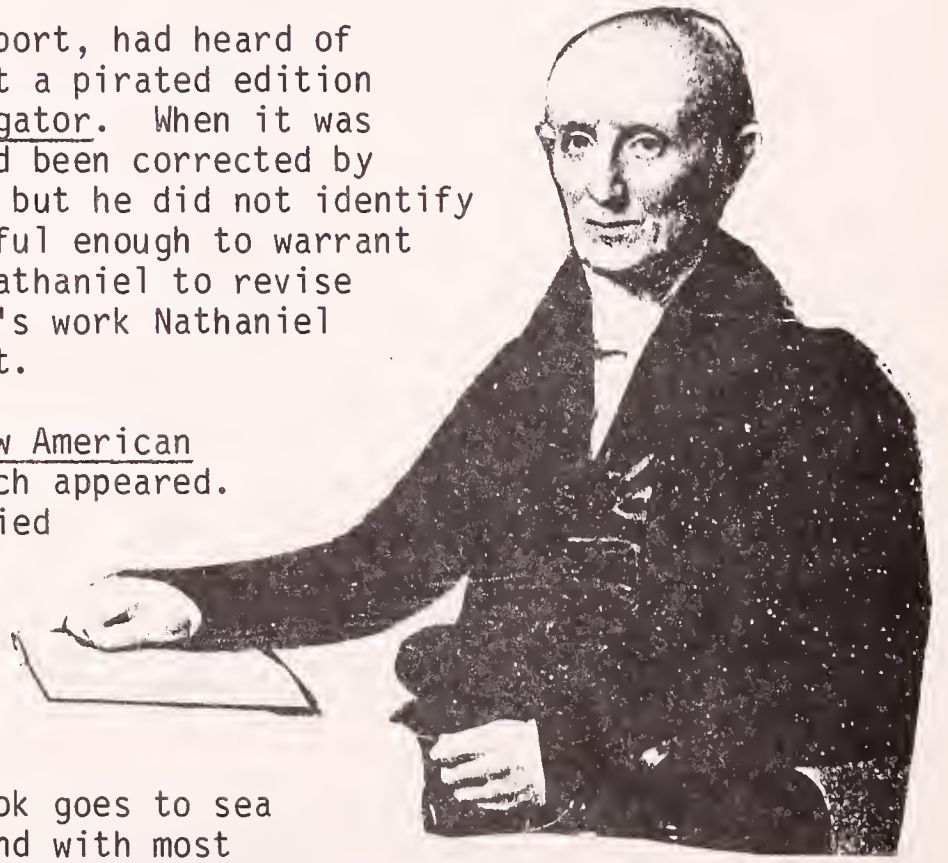
It was this self-taught grounding in higher mathematics that led Nathaniel to world fame.

Between 1795 and 1803 he made five sea voyages, as a ship's clerk on the first one, as the ship's master on the last one. Most of his time off-watch on these long voyages was spent studying, teaching himself French and several other languages, exploring the mysteries of mathematical theory.

Edmund M. Blunt, a publisher of Newburyport, had heard of Nathaniel's talents and asked him to edit a pirated edition of John Hamilton Moore's Practical Navigator. When it was issued in 1799, Blunt stated that it had been corrected by a skillful mathematician and navigator, but he did not identify Bowditch by name. The book was successful enough to warrant two more printings. Blunt then asked Nathaniel to revise the book completely. In studying Moore's work Nathaniel had found 8000 mathematical errors in it.

Finally, in 1802, the first issue of New American Practical Navigator by Nathaniel Bowditch appeared. In this work he made conceptual and applied mathematics exact and reliable for the maritime world, then, now and in the future. New gadgetry, technology, electronics and computers speed things up, but Nathaniel laid the basic frame.

A copy of the latest edition of this book goes to sea with every United States naval vessel and with most merchantmen as well. It is a perpetual best-seller.



The American Practical Navigator

Master of Marine Mathematics

Nathaniel Bowditch, continued

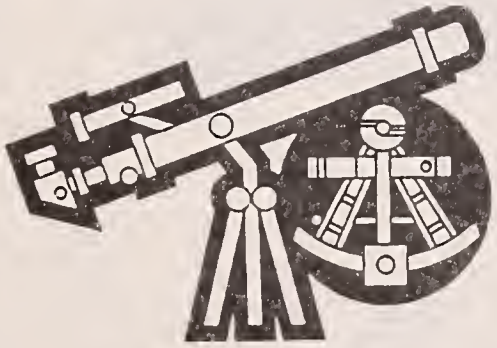
The United States bought all copyrights to this book over a hundred years ago and the United States Hydrographic Office keeps it up to date. That office ceased to number editions of it after it exceeded 60. It is still listed by the Hydrographic Office as HO No. 9 in a series of more than fifty-thousand titles.

In the succeeding years Nathaniel wrote a number of scientific works, including a translation from the French of Laplace's Mécanique Céleste a monumental study of the movement of heavenly bodies; his commentaries increased its value as a work of reference.

Mary was always a great help to Nathaniel, making many sacrifices in order that he might devote his time and their resources to his work. In their spare moments, somehow, they managed to have 8 children. Superb navigation!

Nathaniel dedicated his translation of Laplace to Mary's memory, acknowledging his debt to her.

When Nathaniel Bowditch died on March 16, 1838, at the absolute top of his field, the ships of all nations flew their flags at half-mast as a tribute and gesture of respect. There is still only one Bowditch!



A Little About Ingersolls
Much About Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

John Ingersoll (48 S - Chart A - 5th Generation)

John was born August 28, 1725 at Charlestown, Mass. His first wife was Abigail Russell, whom he married on October 1, 1761. After Abigail's death John married his second wife, Susannah Russel on December 25, 1788. Susannah died in 1814.

John lived in Boston and worked as a shipwright. He and his wife Abigail owned some land in Portland, Me. which John had inherited from his father. They sold this land to General Peleg Wadsworth, the Revolutionary soldier.

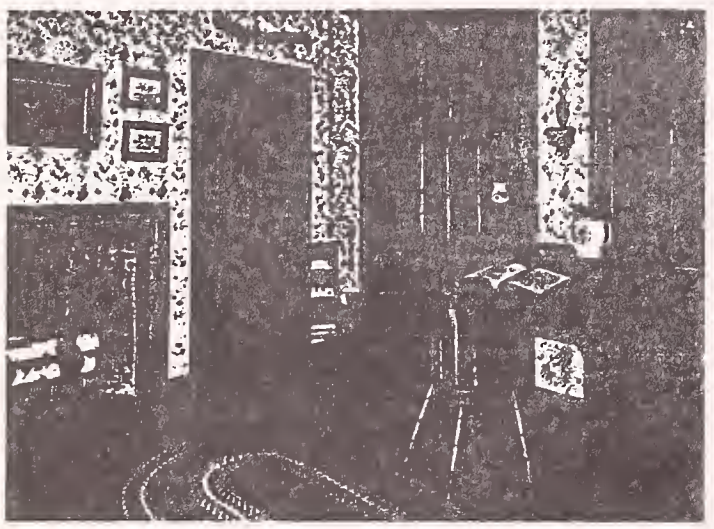
The Wadsworth-Longfellow House

In 1785 General Wadsworth purchased brick in Philadelphia and had it shipped to the town of Portland. On the original Ingersoll land, at 487 Congress Street, Peleg had built the first brick house in Portland. This was probably a substantial contribution to the reconstruction of the city after the British bombardment of October, 1775.

The Wadsworth-Longfellow Home.

Young Longfellow

Peleg's daughter Zilpah Wadsworth married Stephen Longfellow, a lawyer. Their son, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was born in Portland on February 27, 1807. He spent much of his early life in that house. His poem The Rainy Day was written there in 1841. It is best remembered for the line, "Into each life some rain must fall." The house remained in the Wadsworth-Longfellow family until 1901 when it was bequeathed to the Maine Historical Society by Henry's sister.



Wadsworth-Longfellow House] In 1841 the poet Longfellow sat at this old schoolmaster's desk to write "The Rainy Day," a poem most remembered for the line "Into each life some rain must fall."

On September 14, 1831, Longfellow married Mary Storer Potter. They were touring Europe as a part of Henry's foreign language plan in 1835, when Mary suffered a miscarriage in Rotterdam, Holland. She died shortly thereafter, on November 29, 1835. Some of his sorrow may have been expressed in The Rainy Day.

Longfellow's Later Life

On July 13, 1843, Henry married Frances Appleton (Fanny). He continued to write well and profitably and to raise a family. But tragedy struck again. On July 9, 1861, Fannie was preparing a package of their daughter's curls as a memento, intending to

A Little About Ingersolls, Much About Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Longfellow's Later Life, continued

seal the package with sealing wax. In lighting a match to melt the wax, her dress caught fire. She ran to Henry for help but the two of them could not quench the fire soon enough. Frances died the next day, July 10, 1861. Henry's hands and face were badly burned.

This second catastrophe seemed to tinge Henry's writing with melancholy and to add to its artistry. He continued to write until his death in 1882. He was much loved and respected, both here and abroad. Two years after his death, his bust was placed in The Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey, the first American so to be honored.

Gallery

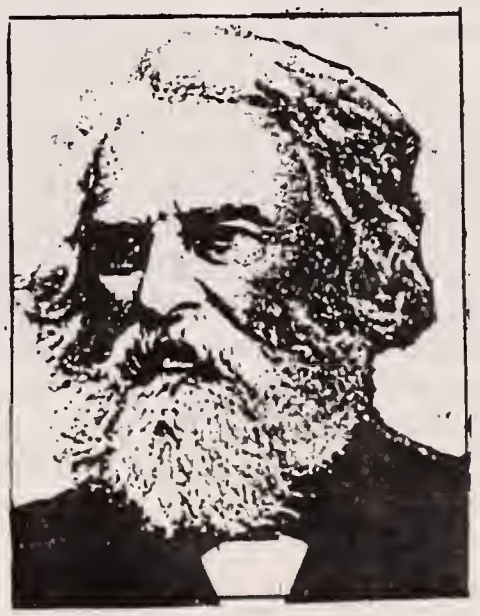
Frances

Henry At 32

Henry At 44

Henry At 47

As Young As He Ever Was



The Older Henry

The picture of Henry at the lower right is the one most people are aware of having seen. Not many people knew that he began to wear a full-face beard after 1861 to mask the scars of the fierce burns he suffered when Frances died.

A Little About Ingersolls, Much About Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Retrospect

The Wadsworth-Longfellow House is now a National Historical Site in Portland, filled with period furniture, including the schoolmaster's desk at which Henry wrote. The original deed conveying the land from John and Abigail Ingersoll to Peleg Wadsworth is on display there.

Like most people my age "Evangeline" was mandatory school reading. It did not impress me much then, nor does it now, for that matter. Poetry is not my favorite form of literature. Elsewhere I have described the sources of the inspiration for this poem. I'll repeat it here and hope that this version does not deviate too much from the earlier one. Nathaniel Hawthorne, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and others were at a dinner party given by Miss Susannah Ingersoll at her home in Salem. Someone told of the recent (then) problems of the English evicting Acadians and transporting them to Louisiana. Hawthorne was excited by the story and asked if he might use it in a tale. The narrator refused since he had already promised that HWL could use the idea.

Compiler's Comment

Probably The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere was the most popular among school children because of its exciting story and patriotic enthusiasm. But Longfellow didn't tell the whole tale nor was the one he told correct. Alas, Revere did not accomplish his purpose, he never reached Concord that night, Longfellow to the contrary. The poet even had Paul on the wrong side of the Charles River and he ignored William Dawes and Samuel Prescott. Dawes did as much as Revere did, but he wasn't the 'name' Revere was. Samuel Prescott was the only one to get to Concord and he just happened to be coming home from a late date. Tsk! Tsk! Ah, well! Poetic License.

The title of this sample poem is "The Childrens' Hour" but only adults understand it.

The Children's Hour

Between the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,
That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear in the chamber above me
The patter of little feet,
The sound of a door that is opened,
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,
Descending the broad hall stair,
Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper, and then a silence:
Yet I know by their merry eyes
They are plotting and planning together
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,
A sudden raid from the hall!
By three doors left unguarded
They enter my castle wall!

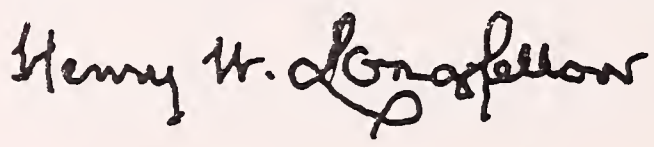
They climb up into my turret
O'er the arms and back of my chair;
If I try to escape, they surround me;
They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,
Their arms about me entwine,
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen
In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine!

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,
Because you have scaled the wall,
Such an old mustache as I am
Is not a match for you all!

I have you fast in my fortress,
And will not let you depart,
But put you down into the dungeon
In the round-tower of my heart.

And there will I keep you forever,
Yes, forever and a day,
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,
And moulder in dust away.



The House of Seven Gables

Samuel Ingersoll (147 S - Chart G - 6th Generation)

Samuel Ingersoll was born 1744 in Salem, a great, great, great grandson of the original Richard of Salem. On October 19, 1772, he married Susannah Hathorne, a great, great. great granddaughter of Judge John Hathorne, one of the presiding judges at the 1692 Salem witchcraft trials.

Samuel was a master mariner, evidently a man of some means. In 1782 he purchased from John Turner a house at 54 Turner Street at the corner of Hardy Street, off Derby. It was built in 1688 by John Turner, the seller's great grandfather. At first it could boast only two rooms, but many substantial additions had been made and when Samuel bought it, it was a fine residence of some size.

Susannah Hathorne was the sister of Nathaniel Hawthorne's father. She and Samuel had five children. Of these, only two survived their father, who died at sea July 15, 1804. Ebenezer, the elder of the survivors, died one week after his father. The remaining child, Susannah (Susy), lived her entire life in this house and died there, a spinster, in 1858. Samuel's wife, Susannah, died in 1811.

Susannah Ingersoll (147iv S - No Chart - 7th Generation)

Nathaniel Hawthorne often visited the Ingersoll home to see his cousin Susy (the younger Susannah). At the time of one such visit, Susy pointed out, in the attic of the old house, that it once had seven gables, one of which had disappeared in renovation. This furnished at least the title for his book The House of Seven Gables and a 'secret' staircase in the house was involved in the novel's plot. The book was published in 1851.

The House of Seven Gables

Susannah Ingersoll, continued

Another story has Horace Ingersoll Mitchell (probably 161ii S - No Chart -8th Generation), (1798-1880), a dinner guest at Susy's when Hawthorne and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow were present. Horace recounted the problems of the Acadians of Nova Scotia. Hawthorne was impressed by the story and would have used it, had not Longfellow beat him to it and asked earlier. Vóila! Evangeline!

Hawthorne was also said to have been inspired to write Tales of Grandfather's Chair from an idea suggested by Susy and based on an old arm-chair long in use in the Ingersoll family.

Susannah bequeathed the Turner Street house to her adopted son, Rev. Horace L. Connolly, Rector of St. Matthews Church in Boston. There were several conveyances of the property until it was purchased in 1910 by a wealthy lady of Salem. She restored it to its original plan. It is now an Historic Landmark, much visited by tourists. Some additions were made to provide several rooms for settlement workers.

Tea Greens

Caroline Howard King's When I Lived In Salem provides a delightful little story, irrelevant, but too good not to share. The first tea used in New England was sent to Philip English in Salem as a specimen of a new and very rare and choice delicacy. The only instruction that came with it specified that it was to be boiled. So boiled it was; the water in which it was boiled was carefully poured off and thrown away. What remained was served at table as greens. Needless to say, the English family did not much relish this new dainty since they had invited friends and neighbors to share this rare treat. (Compiler's note: this tea must have been of the type known as gunpowder tea, which unfurls to a leaf in hot water.)

The English House

The English house in which this dreadful experience took place was originally on the site now occupied by The House of Seven Gables. Mr. Turner, the builder, moved it to its present location at the foot of Essex Street to provide room for the house on Turner Street which he built in 1688 and which his descendant sold to Samuel Ingersoll in 1782. Philip English lived in this Essex Street house and it was called the English House.

There was some talk, after 1851, that this English House was the one Hawthorne had in mind when he wrote his novel. Hawthorne never cleared this up and he was pointedly non-committal when asked.

It was also said that Philip English's daughter married John Hathorne, son of the Judge, even though the bride was at one time accused of being a witch.

A much earlier Samuel Ingersoll (17 S - Chart H - 3rd Generation) who was born in 1658 and died in 1696, left a widow Sarah. Sarah married this Philip English. An anecdote about Sarah is not apropos but too interesting to omit. After Sarah's marriage to Philip, the Court ruled: "Whereas Mr. Samuel Ingersoll's wife is now married and provided with a seat in the meeting-house, ye wife of Francis Downing is placed in ye seat where ye said Ingersoll did sit, he to pay her ye same what it cost her. February 26, 1700." These church-pew seats were like Super-Bowl tickets!

The House of Seven Gables

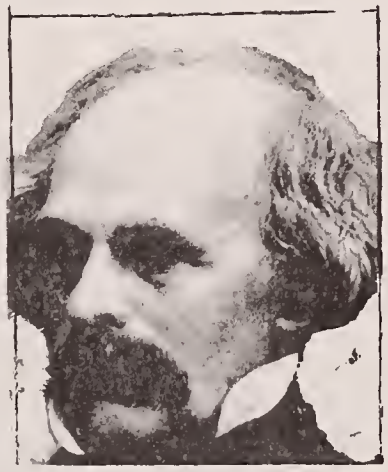
More About Nathaniel Hawthorne and His Ancestor John Hathorne

Nathaniel Hathorne became Nathaniel Hawthorne when he was a student at Bowdoin in 1831. Perhaps he added the 'w' only to separate himself from his 'hanging judge' ancestor. Maybe he just liked the look of the 'w' in there, or preferred the softer pronunciation it brought.

Nathaniel never explained this, as far as I can determine. Many years later, the premier American novelist changed his name from Falkner to Faulkner. If it was good enough for Nat, it was good enough for Bill. Certainly the Wiswells and the Ingersolls are not in positions to criticize these things. Neither are the Wisers, for that matter.

In his book The Custom House, Nathaniel says of old Judge Hathorne that the blood of witches "may fairly be said to have left a stain upon him." I have found no indication that his contemporaries agreed with him in this respect.

Here are reproductions of three pictures of Nathaniel.



Nath' Hawthorne

This is the house in Salem in which Nathaniel Hawthorne was born in 1804. It was moved from its original location to a spot near The House of Seven Gables.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

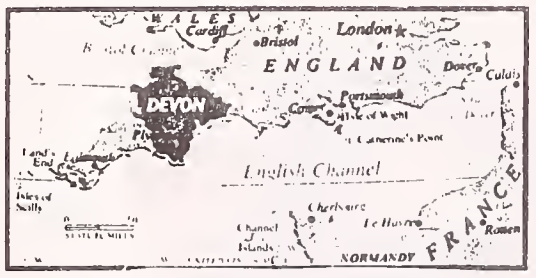
An Ingersoll In Dartmoor

Prisoners of War - 1812

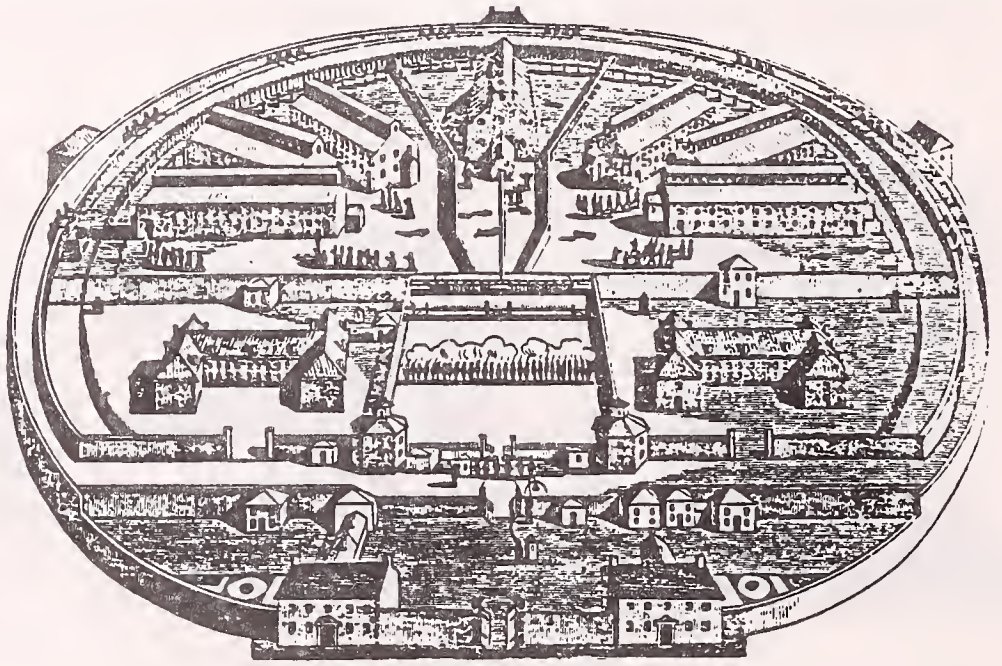
During the War of 1812, ships of the fledgling U.S. Navy and those of government licensed privateers were very active at sea and on the inland lakes. These ships fought well and more than held their own with units of the mighty British Navy. They were not always successful, however; they failed often enough to provide Britain with 6000 captured American seaman. These were confined in several locations in England, 1700 of them in Dartmoor Prison.

Dartmoor was built in 1809 on the bleak, sinister moors of Devon and was originally intended to house prisoners of the Napoleonic Wars. The site selected was in the misty, naked uplands stretching forlornly to the horizon. Dartmoor won a reputation as escape proof; an escapee faced all sorts of environmental problems even if he could scale the man-made obstacles.

A map indicating the prison's location and a perspective of its extensive layout are provided below.



On this map Dartmoor Prison is just north of "Plymouth" and just south of "DEVON."



DARTMOOR PRISON

Prison Rioting and the American Press

Isaac Dafforne Ingersoll (156 S - Chart A - 7th Generation) was born December 12, 1793 in Boston and died April 20, 1855 in New York City. He served in the War of 1812, was captured, carried to England and confined in Dartmoor Prison. The Treaty of Ghent ending hostilities was signed on February 16, 1815. On the following April 6, 1815, the inmates of Dartmoor, Isaac among them, rioted to protest bad food and delay in their release. On the order of the warden, the prison guard fired upon the prisoners, killing 7 and wounding 60. It was later found that the warden, one Shortland, was fraudulently pocketing a part of the funds allotted to procuring provisions.

When the American civilian population heard of this outrage, the press raised a big stink. Certainly publicity and criticism were justified, but the press, typically, exaggerated the details to the point of pure imagination. Long, colorful accounts describing a chain of partially fictional events were printed and widely distributed. Some really dreadful 'poetry' appeared and was well read. Illustrations drawn by obviously prejudiced artists accompanied the maudlin prose and verse.

An Ingersoll In Dartmoor

Prison Rioting and the American Press, continued

A few lines of "poetry" are quoted below, indicating the type of tripe fed to the avid public.

> "And swift as lightning on the wing, their deadly bullets flew,
> The bleeding victims on their knees in vain for mercy plead.
> The savage monster drunk with rage completes the horrid deed!
> Legs, arms and brains were scattered round, when this dire scene was o'er
> And Dartmoor's helpless pris'ners lay immersed in blood and gore."

On and on, ad nauseam, for 114 disgusting lines.

A copy of the accompanying illustration is shown here, depicting the Brobdingnagian prison guards firing on the cringing Lilliputian U.S. sailors who have been driven into a cul-de-sac. This isn't a good picture, which is just as well. I doubt there was a shred of truth in it.

Personal Data

Isaac Dafforne was eventually repatriated and evidently suffered no long term ill effect from his experiences in Dartmoor. He married twice, once in 1822 and again sometime after 1849. He was a produce dealer in Boston and later in New York and had four children.

I have not been able to find the source of Dafforne. Isaac, his father Abraham (92 S), his grandfather Abraham (46 S) and his great-grandfather George (18 S) were each married twice. In the first three of these generations, Isaac's ancestor was the issue of the second marriage.

This observation is about as silly as baseball statistics.

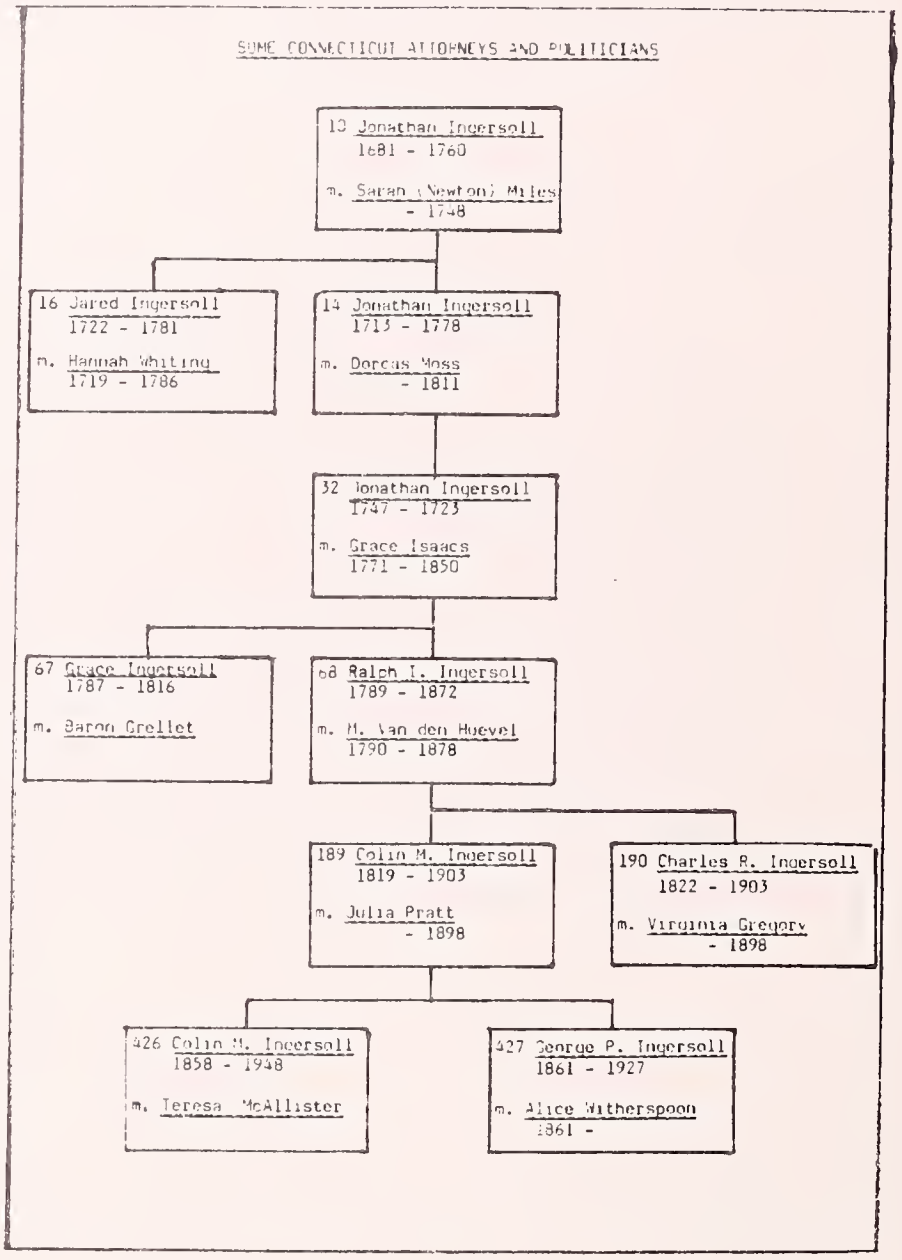
The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Connecticut Lawyers and Politicians

Background

Elsewhere in these pages we have related how Jared Ingersoll (I) became the leading attorney in New England but innocently and unwisely chose to accept the Crown's appointment as agent for the Stamp Act. The repercussions of that action eventually forced him out of Connecticut to Philadelphia, where his son Jared (II) founded a tradition of Ingersoll legal and political presence in Pennsylvania which exists to this day.

Jared's (I) brother Jonathan was a clergyman who remained in Connecticut, whose son established a similar and equally prestigious line of lawyers, judges and legislators in the New England state. The simplified chart provided here demonstrates the relationship of Jared and his brother's progeny.



Jonathan Ingersoll (32 W - Chart J - 4th Generation)

Jonathan was born April 16, 1747 at Ridgefield, Conn., son of Rev. Jonathan Ingersoll and nephew of that Jared who had a bit of trouble with the Sons of Liberty. He graduated from Yale in 1766 at 19, and then taught school in Middletown while studying law in the office of Titus Hosmer.

When Jonathan was admitted to the bar, he settled in New Haven where his Uncle Jared was the leading attorney until about 1770. He became involved in politics and served in both houses of the State Legislature. In 1798 he was appointed a Judge of the Supreme Court but resigned in 1801. He became a leader in the Toleration Party and in 1816 was elected to the office of Lieutenant Governor of Connecticut. He served in that capacity until his death on January 12, 1823.

On April 1, 1786 Jonathan married Grace Isaacs, the daughter of Ralph Isaacs of Branford. She died March 30, 1850. They were the parents of 10 children, including Grace, Baroness Grellet and Ralph Isaacs Ingersoll.

It has been said that no citizen of Connecticut ever possessed more entirely the confidence of his fellow-citizens, and that no one more deserved it.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

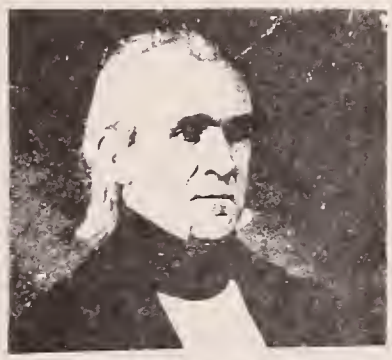
Connecticut Lawyers and Politicians

Ralph Isaacs Ingersoll (68 W - Chart J - 5th Generation)

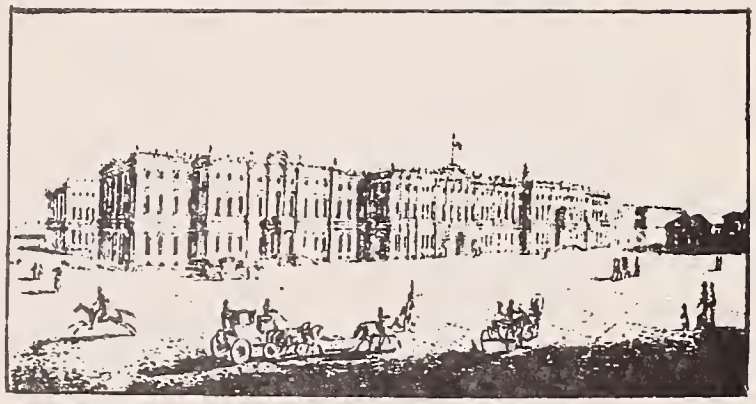
Ralph was born February 8, 1789 in New Haven and died there August 26, 1872. He was the son of Jonathan and Grace (Isaacs) Ingersoll.

Ralph represented New Haven in the Lower House of the State Legislature for seven years. In 1825 he was elected to the House of Representatives and served for four consecutive terms, declining to run again in 1833. He was State's Attorney of Connecticut for several years, and in 1846 he was appointed Minister to Russia by President Polk.

After two years in St. Petersburg he returned to New Haven and spent the rest of his life there, in retirement.



President Polk



The Winter Palace, St. Petersburg

Ralph married Margaret C.E.Van den Huevel, who was born in 1790 and died in 1878. They had seven children, including Colin Macrae Ingersoll and Charles Robert Ingersoll.

Colin Macrae Ingersoll (189 W - No Chart - 6th Generation)

Colin was born in New Haven March 11, 1819 and died there September 3, 1893. He was a son of Ralph Isaacs and Margaret Ingersoll. He broke with the family tradition in attending Trinity College in Hartford, but he did return to New Haven to attend Yale Law School. He graduated in 1839, at age 20. He must have studied hard or he was exceptionally smart to make it so young.

In 1847 and 1848 he was secretary to the United States Minister to Russia in St. Petersburg, who, oddly enough, was his father Ralph Ingersoll.

Upon his return to the United States, he served in the House of Representatives for two terms, 1851-1855. He maintained a law practice in New Haven and served as Attorney General of Connecticut from 1867 to 1871.

Connecticut Lawyers and Politicians

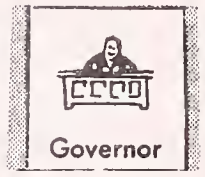
Colin Macrae Ingersoll, continued

Colin married Julia Harriet Pratt, at Prattsville, N.Y. She was the daughter of Zadoc and Abigail P. (Watson) Pratt. They had five children including Colin Macrae Ingersoll, Jr. and George Pratt Ingersoll.

Charles Roberts Ingersoll (190 W - Chart J - 6th Generation)

Charles was born September 16, 1822 at New Haven. He died there January 25, 1903. Charles received an under-graduate degree from Yale in 1846 and later he graduated from Yale Law School.

He was a lawyer all of his life and served three consecutive terms as Governor of Connecticut, 1873 to 1877.

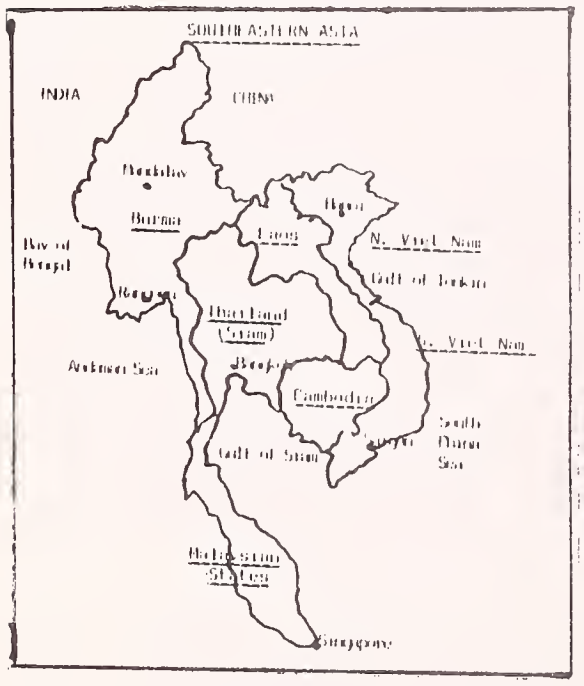


He married Virginia Gregory in 1847. She died in 1898. They had six children.

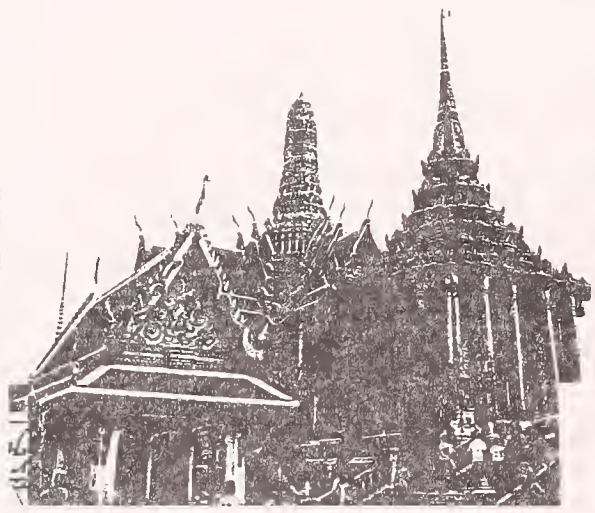
George Pratt Ingersoll (427 W - No Chart - 7th Generation)

George was born April 24, 1861 in New Haven. He attended Trinity College in Hartford, as did his father. He graduated there in 1883 and from Yale Law School in 1885.

He was United States Commissioner for the District of Connecticut for many years. George was appointed Minister to Siam in 1917 by President Woodrow Wilson.



Thailand



Temple in Bangkok

President Wilson

When not serving elsewhere George practiced law in Stamford and in New York City. He married Alice Witherspoon on November 3, 1891. They had two children. George died February 23, 1927.

Colin Macrae Ingersoll, Jr. (426 W - No Chart - 7th Generation)

Colin, Jr. was born December 1, 1858 at New Haven. He graduated from Yale in 1880 with a degree in Civil Engineering, thus breaking the attorney tradition. He was probably bored to tears with legal shop talk. On May 25, 1889, he married Theresa McAllister. They had three children. Colin died April 7, 1948.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Rural Politics a la Ingersoll

Nehemiah Ingersoll (74 H - No Chart - 5th Generation)

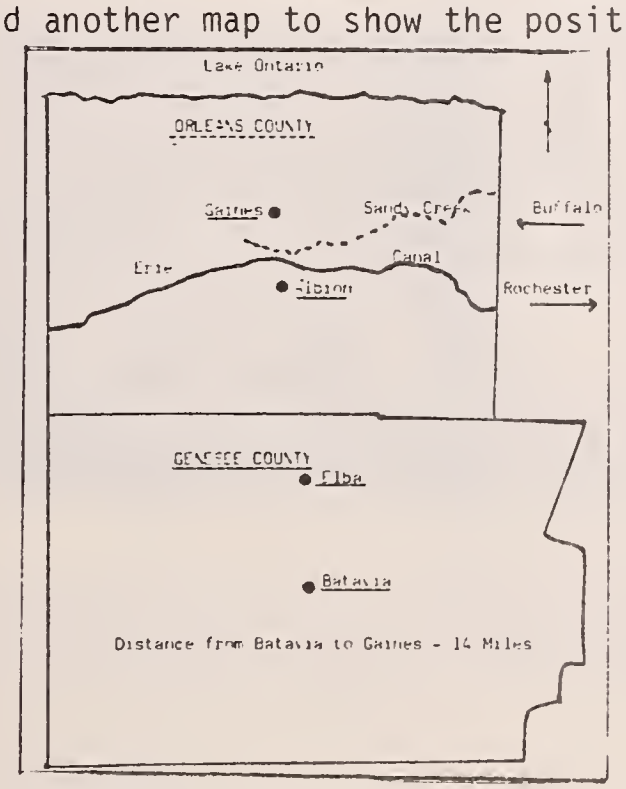
Nehemiah was born in 1786 at Stanford in Dutchess County, New York. In 1816 he moved to Batavia, New York in Genesee County and lived there for two years. He bought a farm in Elba in 1818 and moved there. Elba is about 5 miles north of Batavia.

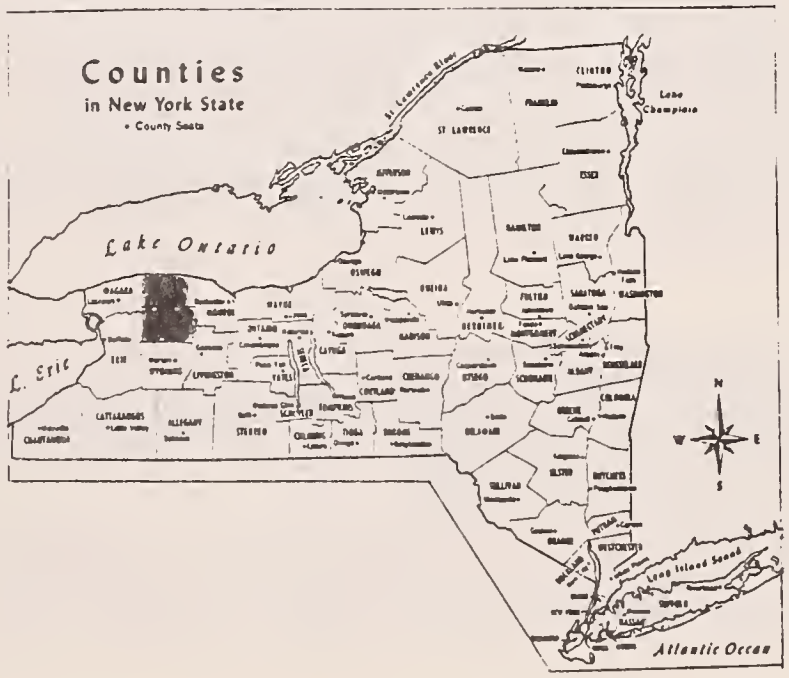
He kept a public house in Elba for several years and evidently sold a lot of profitable refreshment. Four years later, he purchased 100 acres of land in Albion for $4000 and laid it out in lots in expectation of village growth. Nehemiah became interested in the organization of Orleans County as it was being separated from Genesee County.

Choice of County Seat

According to Mrs. Avery, his gift to the town of the grounds on which the Court House was to be erected, determined Albion as the county seat of the new jurisdiction.

This is the story told to Mrs. Avery, evidently the story the family wanted her to hear and use. It may be true. Another version of the decision to designate Albion appears in Body, Boots and Britches by Harold W. Thompson, a collection of stories about rural New York communities. To clarify the geography, I have prepared a sketch map of Genesee and Orleans Counties showing the municipalities involved, and another map to show the position of these counties in New York State.



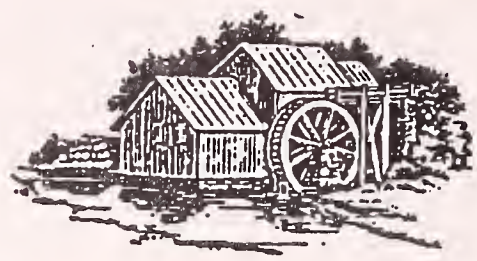


When it was decided to separate Orleans County in 1824, Gaines was a larger and older town, accessible only by road. Albion was nearer to the mid-point of the new county, accessible by road and the Erie Barge Canal. Gaines had no water power while Albion had two saw-mills on the west bank of Sandy Creek. Unfortunately the volume of water in Sandy Creek was normally only enough to turn the mill wheels in spring and early summer when melting snow from the fields and normal rain provided lots

Rural Politics a la Ingersoll

Choice of County Seat, Continued

of water. In summer the water level was so low the mills might lie idle. When would the Commissioners visit Albion to determine its advantages? You guessed it- in mid-summer.



What to do? What to do? Philetus Bumpus and Nehemiah Ingersoll and other upright (?) business men met and decided to do something regarding the lack of water. Upstream two old, leaky dams were carefully patched and water was allowed to accumulate for several days before the fateful visit. Loads of logs were provided at strategic points.

When the Commissioners arrived at Philetus Bumpus's public house in town, and while they were being fed and drenched with beer, fellow conspirators started the mills, opened the dams and began feeding the logs. When the Commissioners arrived at the mills, both were obviously being operated at full capacity. Now the visitors were encouraged, with repeated references to liquid refreshment, to return to town. This they did while water was still flowing well. During their second stop at Bumpus's bar, they voted for Albion as the County Seat, probably well awash by then. At just about this time the dammed water was gone and the stream had ceased to flow and the mills were still.

What do you think? You can accept either version. Personally I prefer the latter story but I don't see how the Commissioners would trust a man called Philetus Bumpus, who ran a saloon and served free liquor. This sounds like an early exercise in American politics. Of course I would like to absolve Nehemiah from any hint of chicanery. Alas, I can find no excuses for him.

Aftermath

Nehemiah was married twice. He moved to Detroit in 1833 and then to Lee, New York in 1845. He died there February 21,1868 but was buried in Mount Albion Cemetery at his request. His first wife, Polly Halsey Ingersoll, died in 1831, his second wife, Elizabeth Brown, in 1869. In her will Elizabeth left $10,000 to the Protestant Episcopal Church of Albion.

Rocked In The Cradle Of The Deep

A Storm In Port

John Ingersoll (204 S - Chart F - 7th Generation) was born in 1788 in Haverhill, Mass. and died August 27, 1815 of yellow fever in Boston Harbor.

Haverhill is on the north bank of the Merrimack River, about eight miles from the Atlantic, a port for many sailing ships. John, who lived in near-by Rock Village, was a seaman just home from a long journey. On May 28, 1807, a violent storm arose. Always the sailor, John was concerned with the wind's effect on the river and the ships anchored in it. He went out to see for himself.

Walking along the river-bank, leaning into the strong gusts, squinting against the wind-whipped spray, he saw a man, in the river near shore, clinging desperately to a rock. It was obvious that the man was near collapse from exhaustion. John waded into the shallow water and helped him, stumbling and slipping, to shore. The man explained that he was one of a group of eleven men who were rowing a small boat out to their brig in mid-stream, when the sudden squall capsized the boat. Some of the rowers were drowned almost immediately but others survived and were clinging to the over-turned boat. This man, a strong swimmer, had set out alone to find help for those he hoped were still alive.

Ingersoll ran to the village, gave the alarm and pleaded for volunteers to help him. No luck. No one wanted any part of that violently agitated water. Disgusted with the villagers, John 'appropriated' a skiff and pushed off, alone, into the main current of the river. He searched for the clinging men in the misty rain and finally found the boat, with men still clutching it. There were four, who clambered aboard while John struggled grim--ly to hold the skiff in position.

This picture isn't of John. No one was there with a Polaroid. It represents a W.D. Andrews, a Canadian seaman who participated in over 50 rescues.

We can be certain that John was long remembered in the prayers of the rescued men, but his neighbors did not publicly acclaim his deed, perhaps not wishing to call attention to their shameful part in the events. But someone remembered and recorded this tale in the Annals of Haverhill.

Fire At Sea

Zelia Ingersoll (608 H - No Chart - 7th Generation) was born about 1843 in New York City. She was married to a master mariner, Captain Hoxie, who commanded a ship carrying freight and passengers on the Liverpool-New York run. Zelia and their small child, also called Zelia, traveled with him on his voyages while the little girl was still too small for school.

This report is largely as given to Mrs. Avery and as quoted by her. It has been edited a bit for continuity and logic by one who cannot leave well enough alone. Hold on!

Rocked In The Cradle Of The Deep

Fire At Sea, continued

On the ship's last voyage, a fire of unknown origin was ignited in the hold. When it was discovered, the efforts of the crew to quench it or contain it were in vain. Hatches were battened and caulked in the hope that denying it oxygen might smother the fire. This was probably of some help in slowing its progress but only that.

Captain Hoxie ordered the crew to build a large raft, provision it with water and emergency rations, and to lash it along side. He cautioned the crew not to cut it loose until he so ordered, feeling that he could best calculate the time remaining and delay launching the raft while making the greatest headway toward land with the ship's sails.

At night, while some watches were sleeping, most of the crew and all of the passengers boarded the raft and set it adrift. Perhaps the passengers bribed the crewmen, doubting the Captain's ability, hoping to save themselves.

At day-break, the captain, his family and the remainder of the crew awoke to find themselves raftless, abandoned, burning brightly. The masts, charring from their bases in the bilge, had sunk seven feet below the deck.

Things looked rather bleak and hope was fading. But, lo, the tip of a sail appeared on the horizon and grew into a ship of some size, on a different course.

But the ship's look-out must have spotted the smoke, since it tacked onto a fresh course and beat toward the burning vessel. The survivors were taken off and they watched from the rail of the rescue-ship as flames burst through the deck of the doomed ship, whoosh, with a rush of air and a surge of flame. Almost immediately it was a towering torch.

Thus some people lived to tell the tale of terror and perfidy. The raft and those on it vanished into eternity.

Men Overboard!

John Martin Ingersoll (240 W -No Chart - 7th Generation) was born January 26, 1845 at Springfield, Mass., the son of Major Edward Ingersoll and Harriet Jencks (Child) Ingersoll. During the Civil Way John served with the 8th Massachusetts Volunteers.

He was mustered out November 10, 1864 and was hired by the government as an ordnance messenger, shepherding shipments from the Springfield Armory (his father's bailiwick) to points of need. In January, 1865, unidentified ordnance was loaded

Rocked In The Cradle Of The Deep

Man Overboard!, continued

in Baltimore on the steamship Georgiana for delivery to Fort Monroe; John was on board and in charge. The vessel cast off late in the evening, steaming southward down Chesapeake Bay in dense fog, heavy rain and wind-whipped seas.

About 2:00 AM, the schooner John Walker, bound north under sail, slammed into Georgiana, its bowsprit penetrating the steamer's forward gangway, wrecking nine state-rooms as far aft as the port wheelhouse, scraping them off the deck and dumping them into the sea.

One of these was John's and he ended up in the freezing, tossing water, tightly clutching a plank. He was in the water for half an hour, bruised and scared, but not seriously hurt. He lost all he had except his shirt and trousers in which he was sleeping.

General Meade

Three of the Georgiana's hands and one stewardess and three passengers were lost. Except for its blunted bowsprit the schooner was undamaged and helped in the rescue effort. The steamer was not otherwise damaged but put back into Baltimore for repairs. John was lucky he didn't sleep in the nude.

General George G. Meade, the union hero of Gettysburg was on board, probably in more opulent quarters than John's. He was unhurt.

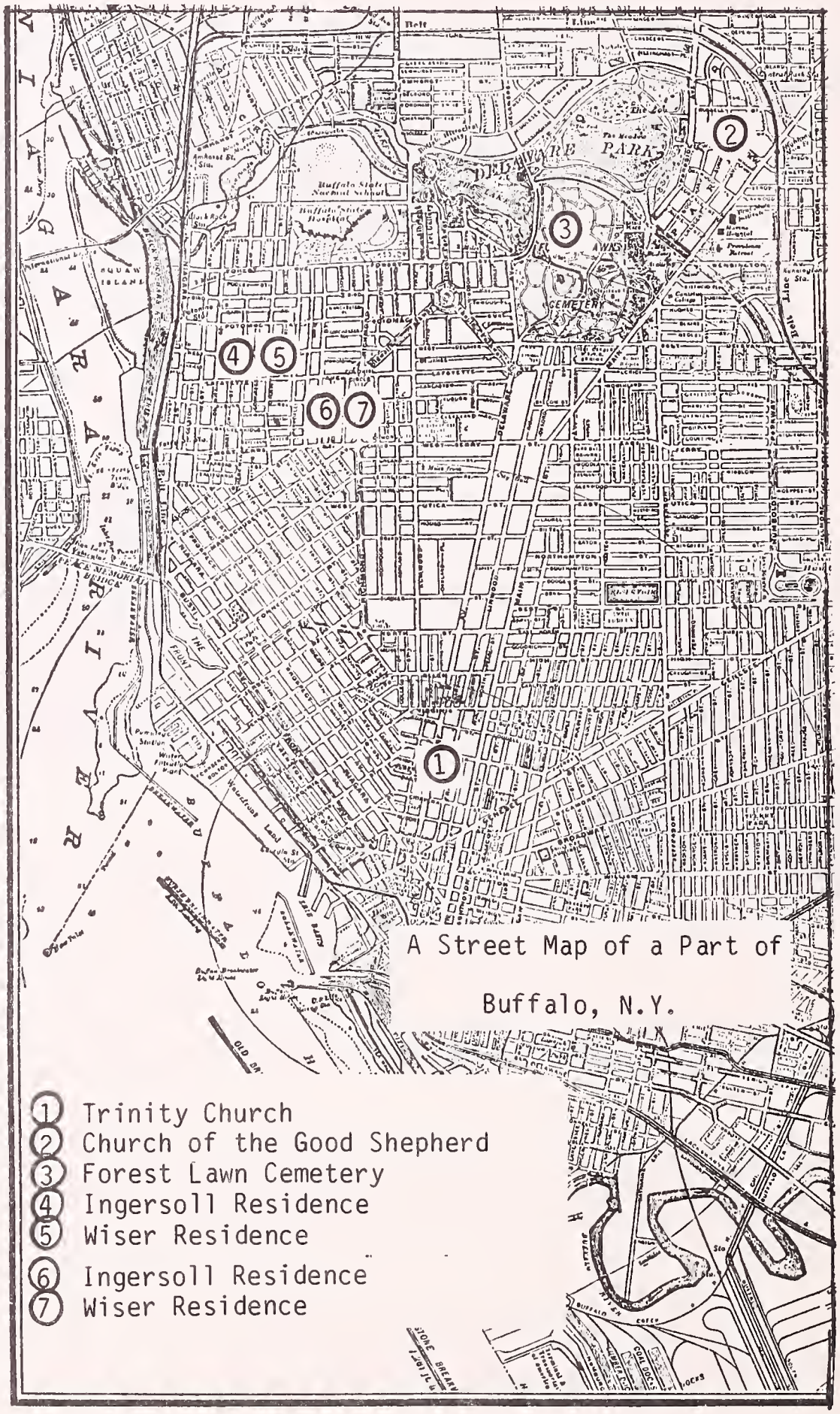
Maybe John was just naturally unlucky, a perpetual loser. He married Sabra Anna Arnold in Haddam, Conn. on November 12, 1872. The area was then affected by epizootic (a disease epidemic in animals) and there wasn't a sound horse available to draw the carriage of the eager newly-wedded pair to the railway station. Two ox-teams were substituted, suitably decorated. The slow pace may have cooled the couple's ardor and we fear there was embarrassment at the incontinence of the beasts. This all sounds like the trick of fiendishly mean ushers or groom's men, but evidently it was real enough.

John's bad luck continued. Late in February, 1885, he was fishing through the ice of the Connecticut River, caught only a cold, developed pneumonia and died on the fourth of March, 1885.

Buffalo - Its Own Small World

Edward Ingersoll (73 W - Chart J - 5th Generation) was born November 26, 1810 at New Haven, Ct. He was a younger brother of Grace, Baroness Grellet. On September 14, 1836 he married Catherine Frances Seymour of Savannah, Ga. Edward died in Buffalo, N.Y. on February 6, 1883 and is buried there in Forest Lawn Cemetery.

Edward graduated from Yale in 1831 with a Doctor of Divinity degree. He was rector of Trinity Church (Protestant Episcopal) in Buffalo, N.Y. 1844-1874 and of St. Peter's Protestant Episcopal Church in Niagara Falls, N.Y. from 1874 to 1878.



A Street Map of a Part of Buffalo, N.Y.

1. Trinity Church
2. Church of the Good Shepherd
3. Forest Lawn Cemetery
4. Ingersoll Residence
5. Wiser Residence
6. Ingersoll Residence
7. Wiser Residence

Trinity Church, on Delaware Avenue in Buffalo, still in use, a fashionable old place of worship, is a large, red sandstone building, somewhat somber in appearance, with a small church yard or court beside it. The writer has driven or ridden past that church hundreds of times without being at all aware of the Ingersoll connection. Equally unaware were the children of Eben D. Wiswell, Sr. and Bernice (Ingersoll) Wiswell, who lived for years in Buffalo and must have seen the church countless times.

There is an Ingersoll Memorial Chapel in Trinity Church.

This is a case of "too late smart." I'm sure that all of us involved would have appreciated this church much more if we had been aware of its Ingersoll antecedents. As far as I know, none of us has ever been in it.

The late Elam R. Jewett of Buffalo erected, in memory of Edward Ingersoll, a handsome gray stone Church of the Good Shepherd on Jewett Avenue in Buffalo.

Buffalo - Its Own Small World

Edward Ingersoll, continued

At that time this site would have been in a suburban area. When the following took place, Jewett Avenue was a very nice, mature residential section of the town. One fine spring evening (probably a Sunday in 1939) this writer and 23 other members of a male chorus participated in a concert at this church. Of course I knew nothing of the church's origin then. I hope we sang well. We were fair amateurs if we refrained from trying something beyond our talents. My wife and my mother, captive listeners, told us it sounded all right, but they were prejudiced.

This Jewett Avenue church was known as The Ingersoll Memorial Church. It has a stained glass window as a memorial to Suzette Linzee (Ingersoll) Hayes, Edward's daughter.

Items 1,2,and 3 on the map on the preceding page refer to the localities mentioned above.

Henry William Rogers Ingersoll (204 W - Chart J - 6th Generation), a son of Reverend Edward and Catherine (Seymour) Ingersoll, was born May 10, 1854 at Buffalo, N.Y. He married Elnora Chittenden on December 8, 1873 (1856-1921). They resided at 146 Breckinridge Street. This writer, his parents, sister and uncles lived on this street from 1915 to 1917, not far from number 146. Refer to items 6 and 7 on the map.

Anna Mary Ingersoll (648 W - No Chart - 9th Generation) was born October 14, 1876 in Owego, N.Y. On November 12, 1896 she married Asa Cafferty Fox in Nichols, N.Y. The Foxes resided for several years at 162 West Delavan Avenue. The writer, his parents and sister lived at 237 West Delavan Avenue from 1917 to 1919. The writer's father died in that house. Refer to items 4 and 5 on the map.

An Ingersoll At Napoleon's Court

Northern Belle

Grace Ingersoll (67 W - Chart J - 5th Generation) was born February 20, 1787, the first child of Judge Jonathan Ingersoll (32 W) and Grace (Isaacs) Ingersoll. In her late teens her sparkling beauty won her the sobriquet "The Belle of New England." She is described as tall and slender, fully rounded, with rich dark hair and large 'Spanish' eyes which seemed now blue, now black.

This is a poor reproduction of a detail of her portrait by Thomas Sully (1783-1872). He was the premier American painter of the time. During his long career he produced 2600 paintings, 2000 of them portraits. Some of his posers were George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, Queen Victoria and Grace. I'll bet her father had to pay a pretty penny for it. Early in his career, Sully evidently felt that the beauty of a woman's arms was best displayed in the outstretched motions of a harpist, and many of his female subjects posed with a harp.

At Court

Grace may have been making a 'Grand Tour' of Europe when she visited France and met Pierre, Baron Grillet, a member of the court of Napoleon. Perhaps it was a whirlwind courtship, maybe an arranged affair, but they were married in 1806.

Frank Goodrich in his book The Women of the Court of Napoleon used several flowery paragraphs to describe her. Among other things, he said, "She shone with a rare and superior charm. More than once the Emperor paid homage to her fascination."

Most of the older nobility that had survived the guillotine of the French Revolution refrained from attending the Court of Napoleon, in spite of his efforts to attract them. In 1807 he created his own Imperial Nobility and in 7 years he named 31 dukes, 452 counts, 1500 barons, 1474 chevaliers, and made their titles hereditary. He commissioned specialists to compose an 800 page manual of court etiquette, which everyone was expected to know by heart and follow exactly. But of himself, Napoleon said, "Etiquette is the prison of kings."

Not exactly what you might have expected from a Corporal of Artillery who became one of the world's smartest soldiers. He was never polite on the battlefield.

Finis

The court collapsed after Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo and his exile to St. Helena. Grace died in 1816, evidently deeply depressed and unable to adjust to a new mode of living. Pierre did not long survive her. They had two children who were placed in a convent until they were adults. Suzette, the older, married a Dr. Thivier and had two children. Harriet became a nun and later was the Mother Superior of a convent.

Writing About Writers

Now Hear This!

Many Ingersolls were gifted writers of technical works on law, engineering and theology; others wrote well-received poetry, fiction and drama, essays and commentary. If I were to list all of the works of which I am aware, I'll bet a nickel very few would read it. Ergo - no list.

I found a few things of special interest. I'll outline them, hoping that you, too, will appreciate their uniqueness.

Ernest Ingersoll (571 W - No Chart - 8th Generation)

Ernest was born March 13, 1852 in Monroe County, Michigan. On September 12,1873, at Norwich, Conn. he married Mary Schofield (1853-1920). His second wife was Frances L. Buchanan, who died in 1929. His third wife was Vera (Edmonton) Nelson.

Early in life, Ernest became interested in natural history. After studying at Oberlin and Harvard, he specialized in studies of birds and fish. He was associated with Louis Agassiz in 1873 and served as a naturalist and collector for the Hayden Survey. Ernest was a newspaper correspondent for the New York Tribune and the New York Herald, and was appointed to the United States Fish Commission.

He wrote many books about birds, fish, conchs and travel, and a series of books for young people. He was a lexicographer for the Century Company Dictionary and Encyclopedia. The illustration at the right is from his work Book Of Oceans which was published in 1896. It represents passengers on a sailing ship in 1849, bound from New York to San Francisco. These people, of course. are eager to pick up some of those big nuggets lying in the fields or even in the streets. For this privilege they have paid $1000 each for the fourteen thousand mile trip, seasickness thrown in.

Ernest worked extensively for the Canadian Pacific Railway as a publisher of company literature and wrote for Canadian newspapers and magazines. He died in New York City on November 13, 1946.

Harry Harper Hudson (374ii(a) W - No Chart - 9th Generation)

Harry was born December 12, 1870 at E. Cleveland, Ohio, the son of Warder Sigismar Hudson (1845-1912) and Melissa Harper Hudson (1847-1879) and the grandson of Clarissa Ingersoll Hudson (374 W - No Chart - 7th Generation)(1819-1892) and William Perkins Hudson (1820-1890).

According to Mrs. Avery, Harry Harper Hudson was a "writer of short stories for magazines. His 500th story has just been published (1925)." At this distance and 67 years after that 500th story was published, I can find no record of any of these stories nor can I find Harry listed in any of the Biographical Dictionaries available to me. Of course he could have written some or all of them under a pseudonym or several.

Writing About Writers

Harry Harper Hudson, continued

As a one-time hopeful writer of short stories, I appreciate the tremendous effort, sweat, patience, frustration, paper and ink Harry must have put into that mass of work. Unless he was fortunate to sell every piece he wrote, he must have had as many failures as he did successes. Count the words!

Harry could boast of 500 published stories. I could boast of 500 rejection slips.

Lurton Dunham Ingersoll (351 H - No Chart - 6th Generation)

Lurton was born April 10, 1833 at Camden, Ohio. He died August 24, 1879. On October 31, 1853, he married, first, Martha Louisa Jennison (1833-1855). He married, second, Julia Reed Talman.

Lurton graduated from Wabash College. During the Civil War he was a war correspondent for the New York Herald, using the non-de-plume Lincoln Sale. He wrote histories, books of travel, biographies. A comment by an unknown observer - "He was a brilliant but erratic genius." He had three children by his second wife.

Luther Alexander Ingersoll (565 W - No Chart - 8th Generation)

Luther was born August 7, 1852 at Delta, Michigan. He married Mary Otto of Ypsilanti, Michigan on September 5, 1881. They had one daughter.

Luther was a prolific writer of California history. In 1910 he gave perpetual custody of his collection of original and valuable photographs of early California and Californians to the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce. These covered about 100 years, from 1810.

Luther was exceptionally patient and successful in tracing old Spanish documents which other historians claimed did not exist. He wrote Century Series of California Local History Annals, in several volumes, and a history of women's achievments in California.

Charles Jared Ingersoll (78 W - Chart J - 5th Generation)
Joseph Reed Ingersoll (79 W - Chart J - 5th Generation)
Edward Ingersoll (80 W - Chart J - 5th Generation)

These brothers were the sons of Jared Ingersoll who signed the Unites States Constitution and grandsons of Jared Ingersoll, the pre-Revolutionary ex-Stamp Tax Collector. Their mundane accomplishments are enumerated elsewhere. Check the index.

Charles Jared wrote poems, plays, a 4-volume history of the War of 1812 and numerous newspaper articles. Joseph Reed translated Latin texts and wrote biographies and essays. Edward wrote a Digest of Laws, an Abridged Edition of Acts of Congress, and poetry under the name of Horace.

High IQ'ers

What This Is About

There were very brainy people among the Ingersolls. Some had only rudimentary formal education and no opportunity or inclination to pursue learning on higher levels but nevertheless made their marks in the world. Others, given the chance, displayed intelligence and learning diligence far above the norm. Brief particulars of some of these 'brains' are given below. I'm willing to wage a sou or two that these studiers were the envy of many a classmate who struggled in frustration and dispair, just managing to keep his chin above the quicksand of failure and expulsion.

Charles Ingersoll (214 W - No Chart - 6th Generation

Charles was born December 8, 1805, the son of Charles Jared Ingersoll and the great, great grandson of the original Jared of Stamp Act fame (or infamy). Charles entered the University of Pennsylvania in 1819 and graduated in 1822. He was a lawyer and an author. He died at sea, on August 23, 1882.

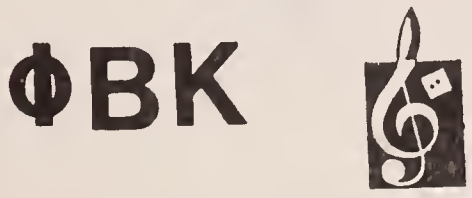
Judge Jonathan Ingersoll (32 W - Chart J - 4th Generation)

Jonathan was born April 16, 1747 and graduated from Yale in 1766. He was a lawyer, legislator and judge. Jonathan received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Yale on the 50th anniversary of his original graduation. There is more about Jonathan elsewhere in these pages.

Honorable Joseph Reed Ingersoll (79 W - Chart J - 5th Generation)

Joseph was born June 14, 1786 and graduated from Princeton in 1804. He was a lawyer, a congressman and a writer. Joseph appears earlier in this archive.

Charlotte Ingersoll (474 W - No Chart - 8th Generation)



Charlotte was born February 2, 1877. She studied at Rockford College and spent two years in Dresden, Germany, studying music and languages. Charlotte graduated from Beloit College in 1899, a member of Phi Beta Kappa, the national honor society.

Edward Ingersoll (218 W - No Chart - 6th Generation)

Edward was born April 2, 1817. He entered the University of Pennsylvania at age 13 and graduated at age 16. He was admitted to the Pennsylvania Bar at age 21, the minimum age for a lawyer to practice.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

High IQ'ers

Florence Ingersoll (414 W - No Chart - 7th Generation)

Florence was born April 19, 1864 at Sandy Creek, New York and died December 27, 1924 in Paris, France. In March, 1887 she married Arnold Smouse, who was born April 18, 1855 and died March 10, 1898. They had one child:

Florence Ingersoll Smouse (414i W - No Chart - 8th Generation)

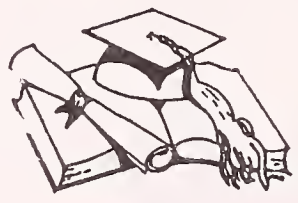
Florence was born January 18, 1888 in Washington, Iowa. She graduated from Syracuse University in 1910, then went to Paris to study the history of art. Her widowed mother accompanied her. The younger Florence was the first American woman to receive a Doctor of Literature degree from the University of Paris. She remained in France and published several books on art.

At University of Paris, teacher and robed scholars, seated or standing with ornate scepters, make academic points, circa 1400. *

James Wernham Ingersoll (336ii H - No Chart - 7th Generation)

James was born September 18, 1867 and died April 19, 1921. He spent most of his adult life associated with education, much of it at Yale, thus:

Student at University of Rochester	1887-88
Student at Yale University	1888-92
Graduate student at Yale	1892-94
Tutor in Latin at Yale	1894-97
Asst. Professor of Latin at Yale	1897-1921



Integer vitae scelerisque purus **

All of James' adult life he suffered from the effects of a youthful disease, presumably infantile paraysis.

Boola Boola!

*Don't look for a magnifying glass. The fine print reads:

At University of Paris, teacher and robed scholars, seated or standing, with ornate scepters, make academic points, circa 1400.

** Upright of life and free from wickedness.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Canals, Canalling, Canallers

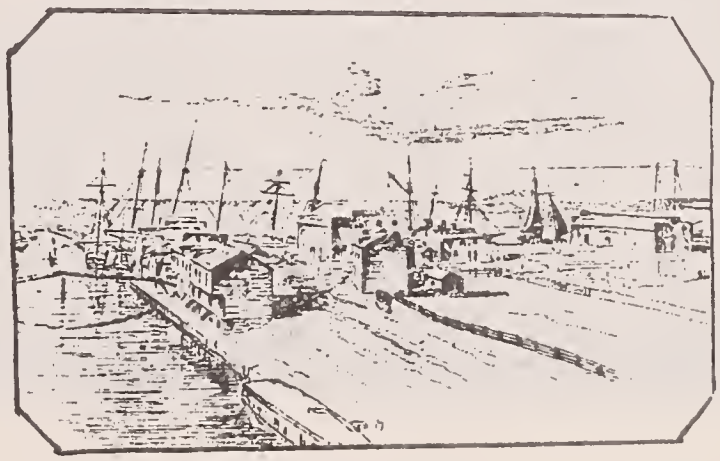
Refresher Course

The odds are ten to one that you have forgotten most of what you ever knew about the Erie Barge Canal. Lend an ear! It was opened in 1825 and was fully paid for 13 years later. It extended 363 miles from Buffalo to Albany. The use of the canal so reduced the cost of east/west freight shipments that it became the preferred method of transporting merchandise and imported goods to the developing mid-west and of shipping grain, ore and other products to the industrial east. In the first year 7000 barge-loads moved from Albany to Buffalo.

Governor DeWitt Clinton opening the locks of the Erie Canal.

Flat-bottomed barges were used, constructed especially for the four-foot depth of the canal. To prevent excessive bank-wash a speed limit of four miles an hour was established. Mules usually provided traction on the tow paths, but horses were sometimes used. There was passenger traffic of a sort, but the drastic reduction in freight rates attracted many a customer. Using other means, before 1825, it cost $100 to move a ton of stuff from Buffalo to New York. Barge rates were from $10 to $12 a ton. Since the canal hooked up with the Hudson River at Albany, it was responsible in large part in making New York City the country's leading seaport.

It was a boon to Buffalo too. This village on Lake Erie was just beginning to grow again after being destroyed by the British in the War of 1812. Below are a picture of a modern roadside memorial plaque and a sketch of the town as it was at the time the canal opened. A canal barge is at front center, moored at the tow path.



Passenger traffic wasn't as lucrative as freight but there was still a lot of it. Riders were accomodated at "a cent and a half a mile, a mile and a half an hour. Obviously this type traveling was slow and most people preferred to go by stage-coaches, sacrificing cost and smooth-ride-comfort for speed. The passenger boats were called packets; they provided relatively luxurious quarters, some with berths and a dining room, usually with superior horses or mules.

Canals, Canalling, Canallers

Hiram Jackson Ingersoll (303 W - Chart J - 7th Gneration)

Hiram was born October 11, 1824 at Lee, Mass. He died December 13, 1903 at Schenectady, N.Y. He married Eva Elizabeth Van Epps, who died the same day as her husband.

Hiram was the captain of just such a passenger packet as described above. Here is a picture of a packet gliding slowly and majestically across the New York countryside, while passengers take the air and perhaps a sip of tea or a nip of cider. The helmsman is blowing a horn to alert a barge approaching from the opposite direction. If you look closely you can see that passing must be done with care since the teams for both barges use the same tow path.

The introduction of faster locomotives on the rails ended the passenger traffic on the canal and Hiram's job too. The steel juggernaut shown here was the Dewitt Clinton, New york's first train. This was a huffing, puffing novelty and people came regularly to the stations to hear it roaring come and roaring go.

Hiram landed on his feet and quickly found a new job with the company that had put him out of work - New York Central Railway - and he retained it for twenty-three years. He was industrious even after he retired from railroading; he ran for public office and was elected Sheriff of Schenectady County. Later he became a member of the County's Board of Supervisors.

Canals. Canalling. Canallers

Unsuccessful Builder

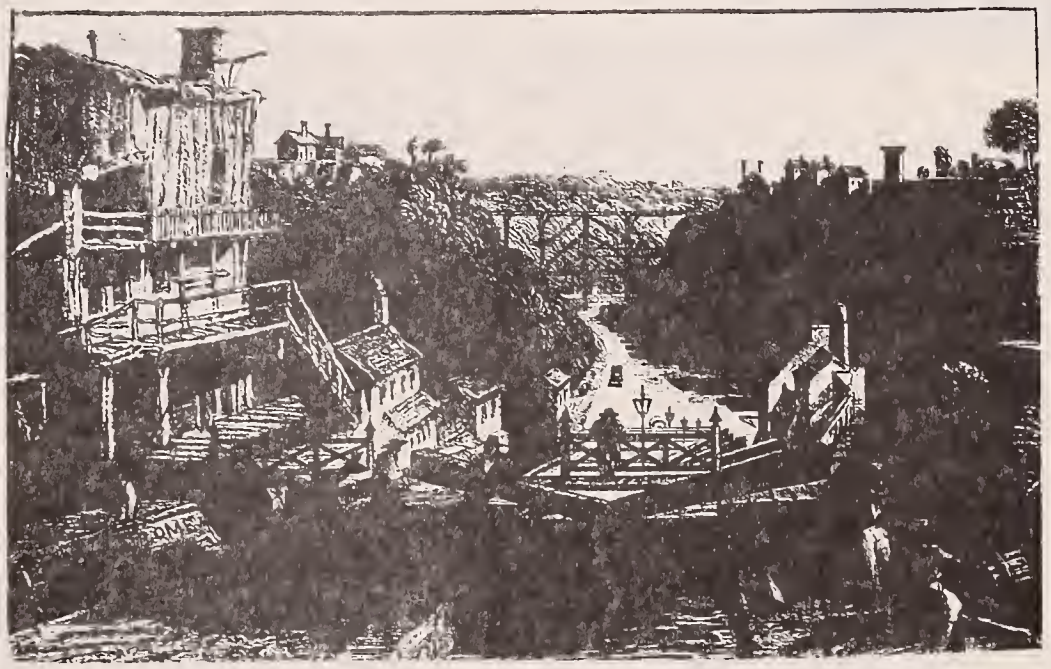
Erastus Ingersoll (131 W - Chart J - 6th Generation) was born November 9, 1772. in Lee. Mass. Later on he settled in Victor. N.Y. While living there he became involved in building locks for the new Erie Barge Canal at Rochester. N.Y. and evidently went broke on the contract. Salvaging what he could he headed for Michigan in 1825. He married Sally Smith in March. 1806. They had 12 children. the first nine born in Victor. Erastus died in Lansing. Michigan on January 19, 1851. Sally died in 1858. in Delta, Michigan.

This is one artist's conception of the locks at Rochester. This indicates a five-level lift. In my opinion he exaggerated the size of the town at that time.

Operating the Canal and Singing About It

At the right is an artist's idea of a lock in operation. This may or may not be accurate. but it certainly demonstrates the luxurious quarters provided for the staff. Note the natty penthouse at the left.

Or was this for overnight guests? Quick. Henry. the Flit!



Thomas S. Allen composed the music and wrote the words for a popular song about the canal, "Low Bridge - Everybody Down (or Fifteen Years on the Erie Canal)." One hundred and sixty years later this is still sung by small town barber-ber shop quartets. It has a catchy melody and sings easily.

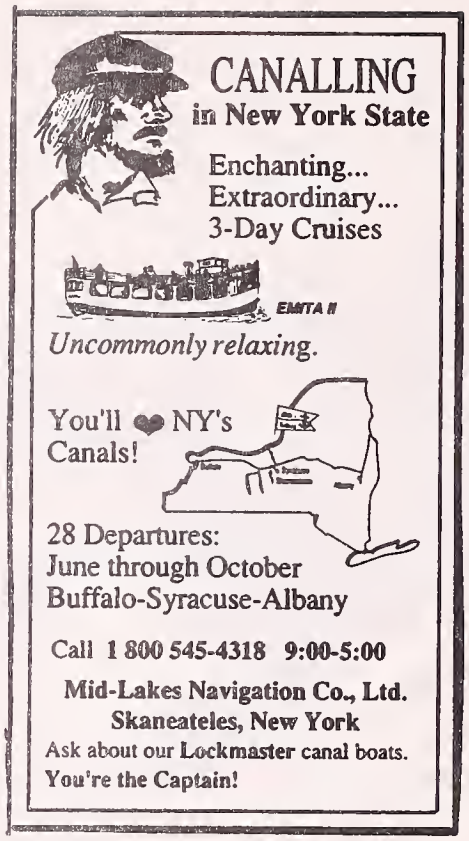
Note the mule and rider are both ducking to avoid "Low Bridge".

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Canals, Canalling, Canallers

Modern Canalling

The canal still carries some freight but it cannot compete with Amtrak, trucking lines, air-freight and the shipping that uses the Welland Canal and the St. Lawrence Seaway. You can still find out what it was like in the old days, if you can decelerate that much. You can travel leisurely for 3 days on the Erie Barge Canal, singing "Low Bridge" all the while, in a well - appointed packet. But it will cost you a packet. Bring money and time.



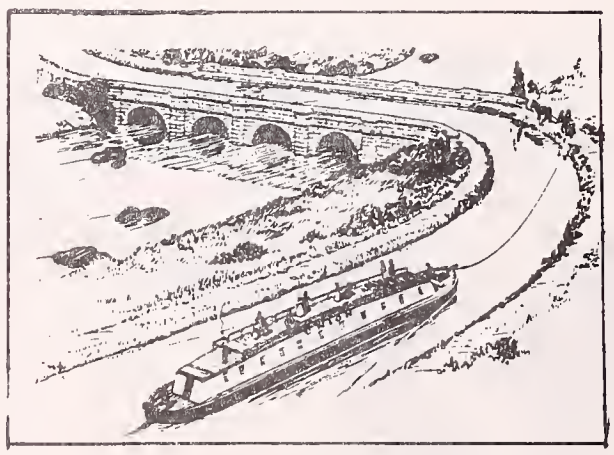
Interlude

At one time the writer of this melange lived in Buffalo, New York and worked in North Tonawanda. This necessitated crossing the Erie Barge Canal at least twice each working day. The office where I made marks on paper was separated from the canal by a street and a narrow parking lot.

One summer day in 1930 Franklin D. Roosevelt, then governor of the state, was touring the hinterland, using the canal and a very fancy executive barge (self-propelled). It stopped just opposite the office and FDR alighted, with help, and entered a waiting limousine to be whisked off to Buffalo and elegant affairs. I saw him clearly with his cigarette holder arrogantly tilted between clenched teeth. He was beginning to get the White House itch. In those days, the legal voting age was 21. I wasn't that old but on that day I became a Republican. Above, left, is a picture of the man who was elected President four times without my vote.

Bonus

On the left, below, is a packet about to enter a lock to be raised to another level. Look closely to see a lookout on the prow and a guide on the tow path, signalling the helmsman as needed. The other picture is of a two story water-way, with the canal being carried over a river, still within its own banks.



The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Civil War Sailors

Ahoy!

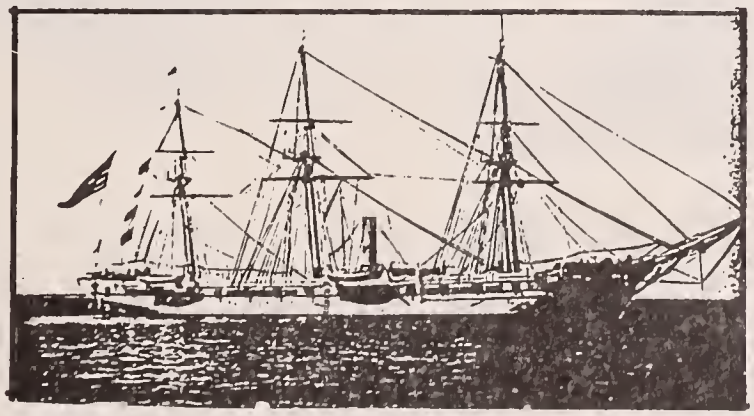
During the Civil War, several Ingersoll men served in the Union Navy. Little is known of their exploits but I'll share what I found out about them.

But first I'd like to offer brief comment regarding the names of naval vessels. The U.S. Navy has a method of assigning names to its ships, which I will not describe, laud or decry. Whatever the merits of the present system, if any, it is not constant or consistent. The Navy has always had its favorites - Wasp, Hornet, Essex, Enterprise and many others. Some of these date back to the very early days of the Navy. I have no idea how many times Wasp has been used - perhaps half a dozen. This scheme poses some problems for researchers since a name is used over and over again as ships are sunk, burned, blown up, scrapped, sold or converted. For example, the Essex mentioned below is not the beautiful frigate sailing the oceans free after the Revolution, nor the massive, majestic aircraft carrier of World War II, but, rather, an ugly squat, ironclad Mississippi River gunboat which to modern eyes would look more like a garbage scow than a proud, fighting ship.

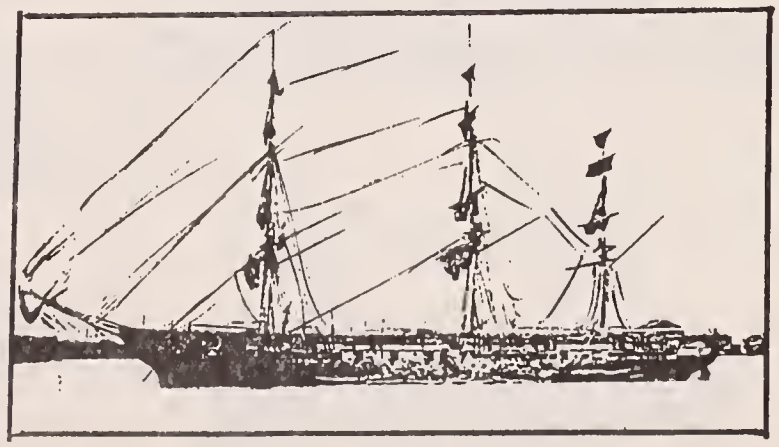
Absalom Nelson Ingersoll (490 H - No Chart - 7th Generation)

Absalom was born in Scrub Oak, Westchester County, New York in 1841 and died in Ossining, New York on January 1, 1910. In July, 1862 he married Emma S. Fowler. They had three children.

His obituary in the Buffalo News in January, 1910 states that he had served as a Corporal on the Brooklyn under Farragut. If he were a Corporal on a naval vessel, he was a marine; the presence of marines on the Brooklyn is quite plausible. However, Flag Officer Farragut was in command of a Mississippi Squadron. His flagship was USS Hartford, but USS Brooklyn was a part of that squadron. USS Brooklyn participated in at least eleven hostile naval actions and was heavily damaged on several occasions. The ship took 59 heavy hits to its hull, rigging and spars in the Battle of Mobile Bay; casulaties among its crew were heavy.



USS Hartford



USS Brooklyn

These ships were wooden-hulled steam frigates, using steam engines and sails when underway. They were equipped with rams and cow-catchers of a sort, as a defense against floating mines. This special equipment was not installed when these pictures were taken.

Civil War Sailors

Absalom Nelson Ingersoll, continued

D. G. Farragut

In the Battle of Mobile Bay on August 5, 1864, a big Union victory, the USS Brooklyn, leading the squadron, sheered away from what appeared to be Confederate mines. Farragut, on the following USS Hartford, ordered that ship to take over the lead and proceed post haste. This is when he gave the order, "Damn the torpedos! Full speed ahead!" These were not his exact words, but the idea is correct. Accounts of the battle state that, at the time, Farragut was in the rigging, lashed to a mast, but exposed to enemy fire. Once the battle was won, the commander of USS Brooklyn was privately reprimanded by Farragut, but he was not then relieved of his command.

Absalom was appointed a keeper at Sing Sing prison in Ossining in 1887 and held that position until his death in 1910.

Charles Ingersoll (475 H - No Chart - 7th Generation)

Charles was born November 12, 1846 and died November 27, 1900 at Auburn, N.Y. He married, first, on October 6, 1870 Jane Hazlett (1847-1896) and, second, on March 24, Grace Maud Mack, who outlived him.

During the Civil War, according to Mrs. Avery's book, Charles served as a sailor on board the flagship Lancaster. The Chronology of the United States Navy 1775-1965 lists a Lancaster as being captured by USS Commerce at Havre de Grace, Maryland on April 26, 1861. A USS Lancaster was severely damaged at Vicksburg and sank, in March, 1863. In March, 1864, a USS Lancaster captured another ship off Acupulco in the Pacific and in October of that year it apprehended the steamer Salvador sailing from Panama City to California and removed a number of Confederates. So much for Lancaster! Never did find Charles!

Daniel Sargent Ingersoll (296 S - Chart F - 8th Generation)

Daniel was born October 25, 1837 at Beverly, Mass. and died there on September 30, 1901. He was a mariner from the age of 15, sailing first with his father, Captain William Ingersoll (197 S - Chart F - 7th Generation). During the Civil War, Daniel served on the receiving ship Ohio, was transferred to USS Ino, became a Master's Mate and was on skirmish duty on the James River, commanding the tug USS Lilac. I was unable to find any record of actions by any of these ships in the Navy Chronology.

Josiah Ingersoll (242 H - No Chart - 6th Generation)

Josiah was born December 4, 1833 at Shrub Oak, Westchester County, New York and died in Peekskill August 19, 1989. He enlisted in the Navy during the Civil War and served 11 months as 2nd Assistant on USS Howquah. The Chronology of the U.S.

Civil War Sailors

Josiah Ingersoll, continued

Navy 1775-1965 indicates that Howquah participated in three hostile naval actions in 1863 and 1864, including the final reduction and capture of Fort Fisher.

I think it safe to assume that the title "2nd Assistant" refers to the Engineering division of the ship. Probably one step up from shoveling coal.

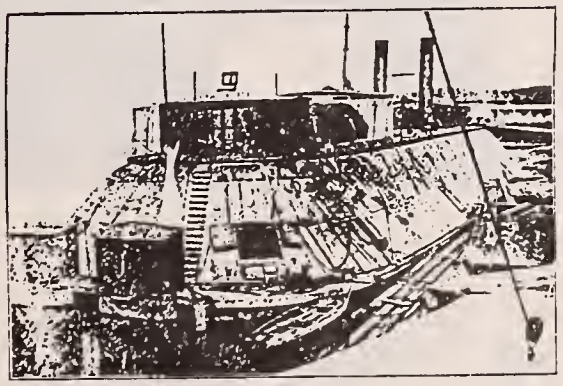
Robert Dewitt Ingersoll (333 H - No Chart - 6th Generation)

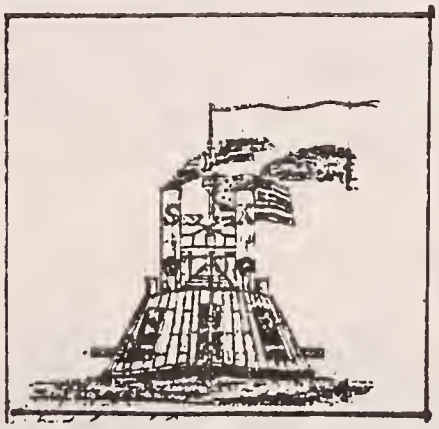
Robert was born September 16, 1838 at East Evans, Erie County, New York. He served for 18 months in the Navy on board USS R.R. Cuyler. Records indicate that this ship participated in a dozen enemy actions from April, 1861 to December, 1864. Evidently all of its action was in the Atlantic, ranging from Rhode Island to Florida and the Tortugas.

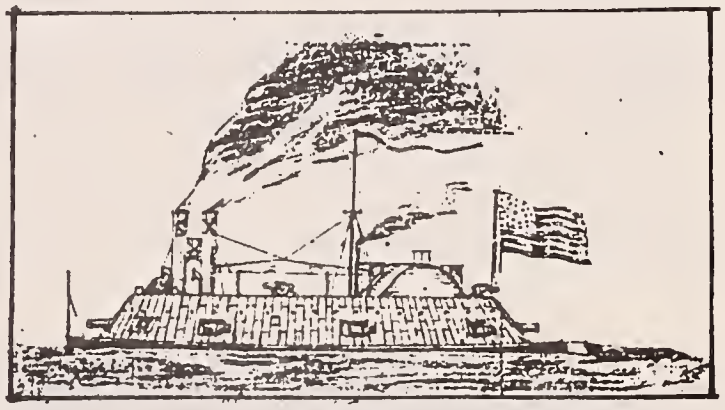
Sidney Franklin Walker (315iii W - No Chart - 8th Generation)

Sidney was born November 27, 1840, the son of Eliza Angeline Ingersoll Walker (315 W - No Chart - 7th Generation) and Andrew Carroll Walker.

During the Civil War Sidney served on board the gunboat USS Essex which was engaged in 14 heated naval actions in the Mississippi Valley, The ship was damaged several times including 14 heavy hits by Confederate cannon at Port Hudson, La. on October 7, 1862.







At the left, above, is a picture of USS Essex, docked, displaying her graceful, sweeping lines. The two other views of the ship were taken from sketches drawn by a sailor on a sister ship.

The four men at the right may or may not have been shipmates of Sidney. They are members of a gun crew who operated a turret in the ship's battle with the CSS Arkansas, which was destroyed.

William Young, front right, was the crew chief and a Medal of Honor winner. At the left is W.L. Park. The men in the rear are Gordon F. Terry, left, and Thomas T. Drew. Heroes all! Hurrah!

Marching Through Georgia

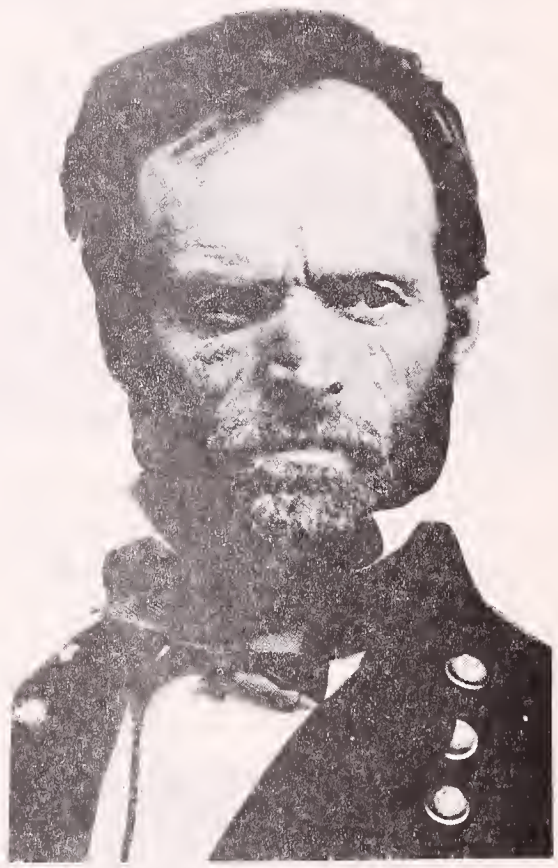
A Soldier's Soldier

William Tecumseh Sherman was born in Lancaster, Ohio in 1820 and graduated from West Point twenty years later, near the top of his class. Subsequently he served at many army posts in the southern states and learned to love the South and its people, developing rather temperate views on slavery.

Still a captain after three years in Washinton, D. C., he resigned from the army in 1853, to enter the business world as a partner in a San Francisco bank which was wiped out in the panic of 1857.

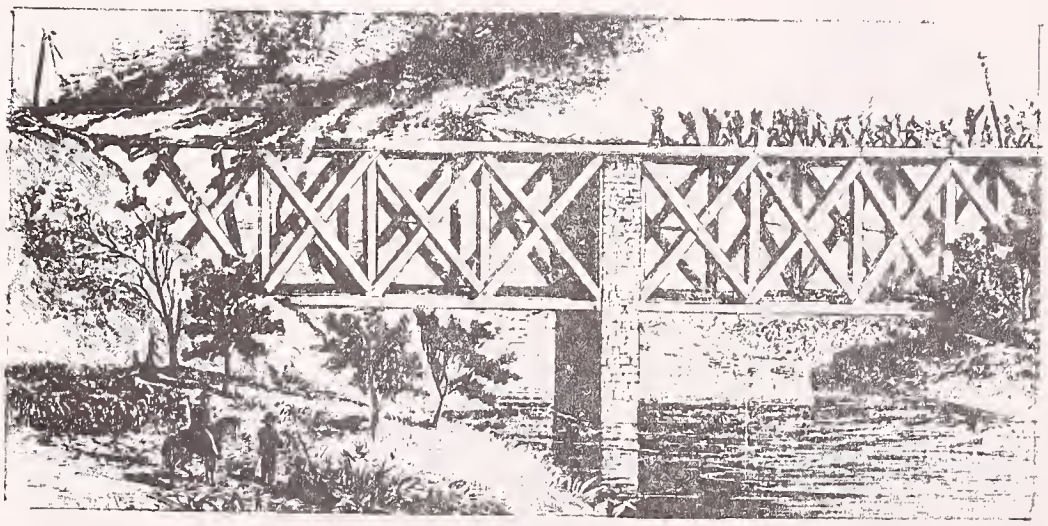
He accepted, in 1859, an appointment as superintendent of a new military school in Louisiana (which became Louisiana State University at Baton Rouge).

When Louisiana seceded from the Union in May, 1861, Sherman regretfully resigned and went to Washington to offer his services. Eventually he became associated with U.S. Grant, who found him to be his kind of soldier. In 1864 Grant assigned Sherman the task of cutting the South in two. When Grant was made Commanding General of all of the Union Armies, he designated W.T. as Commanding General in the West.



Sherman's Campaign In Georgia

During the months of May to September, 1864, the Union Army swept across the South, driving the Confederates into and out of Atlanta and pursuing them as they retreated to the south and west. Sherman realigned his troops, replacing supplies and ammunition. Early in November, 1864 he warned the inhabitants to abandon the city, including Rhett Butler and Scarlet O'Hara. On November 15, he ordered the city put to the torch and marched his 62,000 man army southeast toward Savannah. This column included some Ingersolls and their Chadwick, Prentiss and Wade relatives.



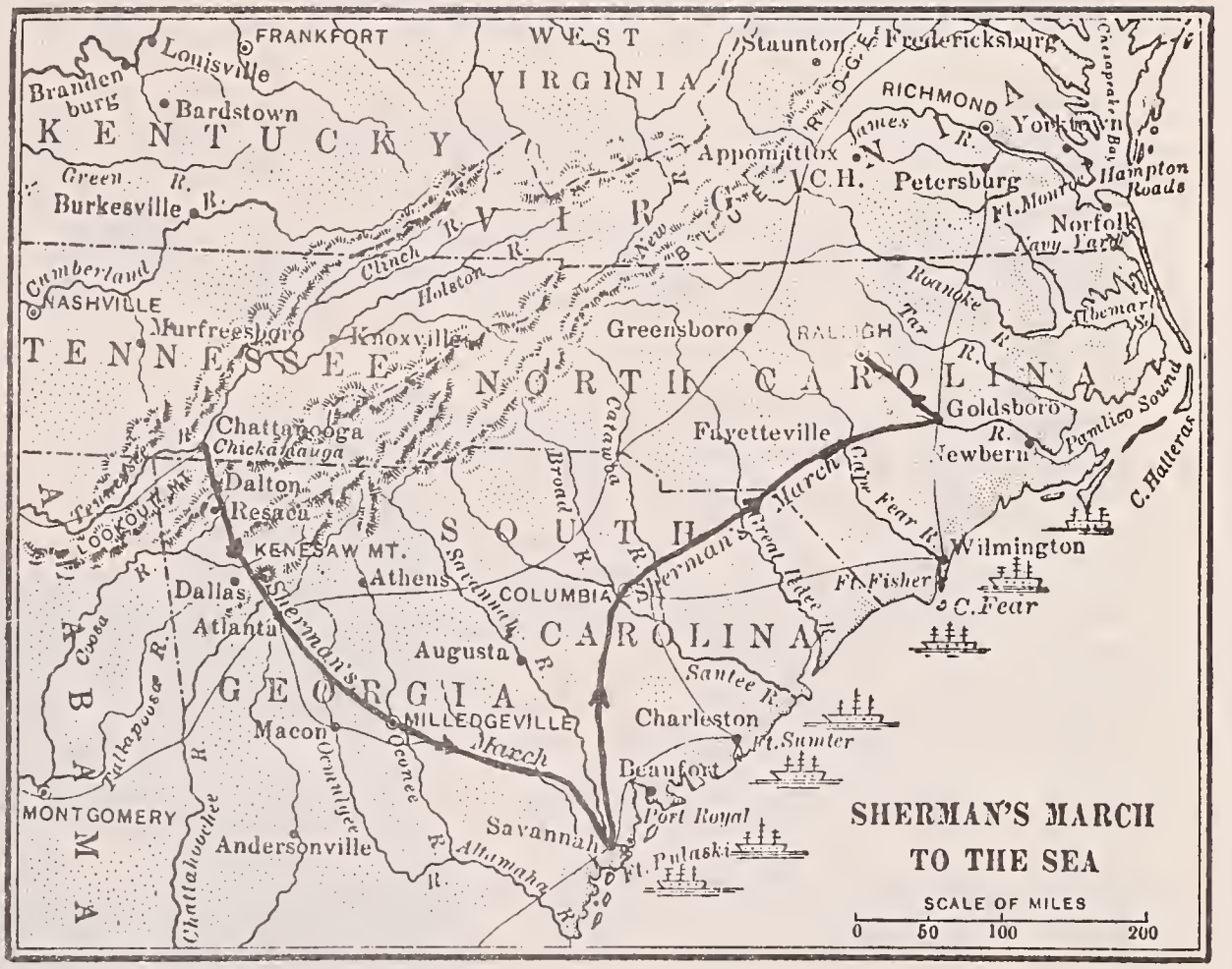
At the left are illustrations of the scorched earth left in the wake of the Union Army as it forged eastward to the sea. The burning of Atlanta was ordered to deny the South anything that might be of value to it.

Marching Through Georgia

Sherman's Campaign in Georgia, continued

On December 21, Sherman captured Savannah on the coast and established communications with the Union Navy. The army then turned northward, marched 425 miles in fifty days and was near Raleigh in North Carolina the day before Appomattox. The Army of the West left no place for the brave but tired Confederates to turn.

The map at the right illustrates the entire campaign.



An Unbiased Appraisal

Sherman was a rough, tough soldier who believed his job was to destroy the enemy and win the war. He believed in total war while he was waging it, and in real peace when he wasn't.

After the cessation of hostilities, Sherman proposed very lenient terms for the defeated southern people. All of his suggestions were rejected by President Andrew Johnson.

Sherman's observation that,"War is hell!" became a part of the American - English idiom. If you asked ten people today if they had heard that expression, I'm sure that all of them would say they had. If you asked them where it originated, I'm equally sure that none would know.

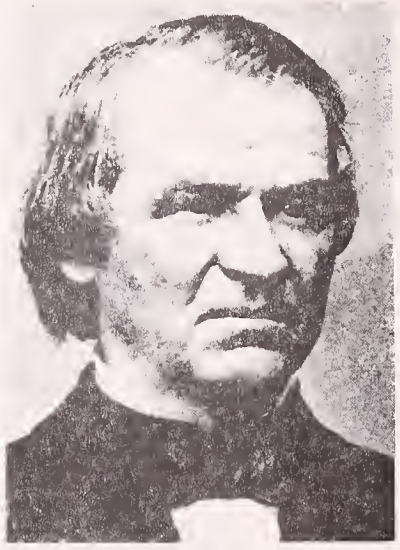
SIEGE OF ATLANTA

Marching Through Georgia

An Unbiased Appraisal, continued

In 1883 Sherman discouraged a possible Republican nomination for the Presidency by declaring, "If nominated I will not run. If elected I will not serve." Sounds like a definite "NO!"

The name of W.T. Sherman is anathema to southerners to this day, as is the Union song Marching Through Georgia. The words to this song, in part, go like this, "Sing it as we used to sing it, fifty thousand strong, while we were marching through Georgia." The lyricist was more interested in rhythm and meter than he was in facts. Were the other 12,000 men all listeners?



Andrew Johnson
Shoes Too
Big To Fill

Many Ingersolls, fathers, sons, brothers, uncles, nephews and in-laws were in the Army of the West that Sherman led. Some of them are listed here, due to the patient recording of Mrs. Avery. I'm sure there were others, but I know not whom. It's likely that there were Wiswells, Snows, Browns, Dunhams, et al, in the same army, perhaps sharing a tent or a mouldy biscuit or a drum stick from a liberated rooster. Alas, we have no record of these people and cannot list them.

Martha Ingersoll (253 W - No Chart - 7th Generation)

Martha was born December 25, 1836. On March 18, 1854 she married Abraham Wade, an Englishman born April 29, 1823. Abraham fought in the Union Army and was one of the 62,000 in 1864.

Sally Ingersoll (138 W - No Chart - 6th Generation)

Sally was born March 3, 1795 at Lee, Mass. and died September, 1835 at Auburn, N.Y. On June 17, 1813 she married Samuel Chadwick of Lee. Their son, Samuel Chadwick (138iii W - No Chart - 7th Generation) enlisted in the 11th Michigan Infantry. At the Battle of Lookout Mountain he had a horse shot from under him and had many narrow escapes from harm. He was a Captain with Sherman in his trek from Atlanta to Savannah in November-December, 1864.

Electra Ingersoll (232 S - No Chart - 7th Generation)

Electra was born May 3, 1808 at Cazenovia, N.Y. and died July 30, 1860 at Marshall, Michigan. She married Nelson Prentiss on June 3, 1827. One of their sons, Albert Nelson Prentiss enlisted in 1861 and was with General Fremont in the Army of the West. Another son, Jerome Ingersoll Prentiss (232v S - No Chart - 8th Generation), enlisted in 1862 and served in many campaigns including Sherman's sashay to Savannah. After the war, Jerome lived in Buffalo, N.Y.

Edmund Genet Ingersoll (229 H - No Chart - 6th Generation)

Edmund was born May 28, 1845 at London, Michigan. He enlisted in Company H, Ninth Infantry. During Sherman's Atlanta campaign, Edmund served as a private at the headquarters of General Thomas.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Marching Through Georgia

Charles Lee Ingersoll (382 S - Chart E - 9th Generation)

Charles was born November 1, 1844 at Perry, N.Y. He died December 8, 1896. He enlisted in Company A, Ninth Michigan Cavalry and was engaged in many battles and skirmishes but escaped unhurt. He, too, was with William Tecumseh all the way from Atlanta to the Atlantic.

Caroline Phelps Ingersoll (239 W - No Chart - 7th Generation)

Caroline was born in Savannah, Georgia on February 1, 1838, the daughter of Major Edward Ingersoll and Harriet Jencks Ingersoll. Her father was engaged in business in Georgia at the time of her birth, but the family relocated in Springfield, Mass. and Edward entered government service.

In 1864 Caroline was part of a group of government sponsored, self-appointed missionary ladies who followed the victorious Union Armies, instructing and educating emancipated negroes, explaining the privileges and responsibilities of the freedom that had been recently granted to them. Caroline entered Savannah, her birthplace, with the Union forces taking possession of the city. A real busy-body, she participated in a number of celebrations connected with General Sherman's triumphant progress.

To the left is an illustration of the sort of thing Caroline and the other ladies were doing. I would judge the picture to be inaccurate in the number and attentiveness of the 'students.' These were known as primary schools for the freedman. I have no idea if these efforts were considered to be effective, nor do I know how long they were continued.

John Wesley Ingersoll (655 H - Chart I - 7th Generation)

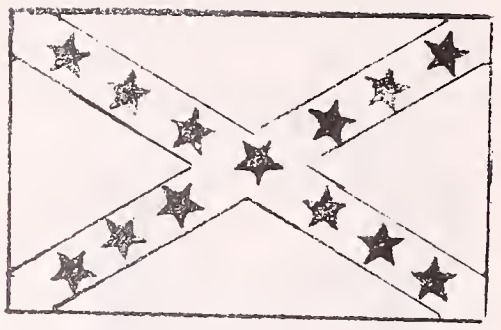
John Wesley was born December 10, 1848 in Illinois. At the age of 13 he enlisted in Company G, 48th Illinois Infantry. By gradual promotion he rose to the rank of Colonel at the age of 19. He was with the Army of the West, probably serving as a 16 year-old captain, all the way to Savannah in November-December, 1864.

John married, first, on April 26, 1888, Mary Elizabeth (Rosignol) Weisenberger, a widow, daughter of Philip and Catherine Rosignol. She died March 13, 1900. John married, second, on June 28, 1904, Mrs. Emily Ann (Goforth) Ridgway, daughter of C.O.B. and Julia Goforth.

John and Mary Elizabeth had one son, George Stuart Ingersoll, born October 18, 1869 in Mt. Carmel, Illinois.

Marching Through Georgia

A Look At The Other Side
Irena Maria Ingersoll (341 S - No Chart - 8th Generation



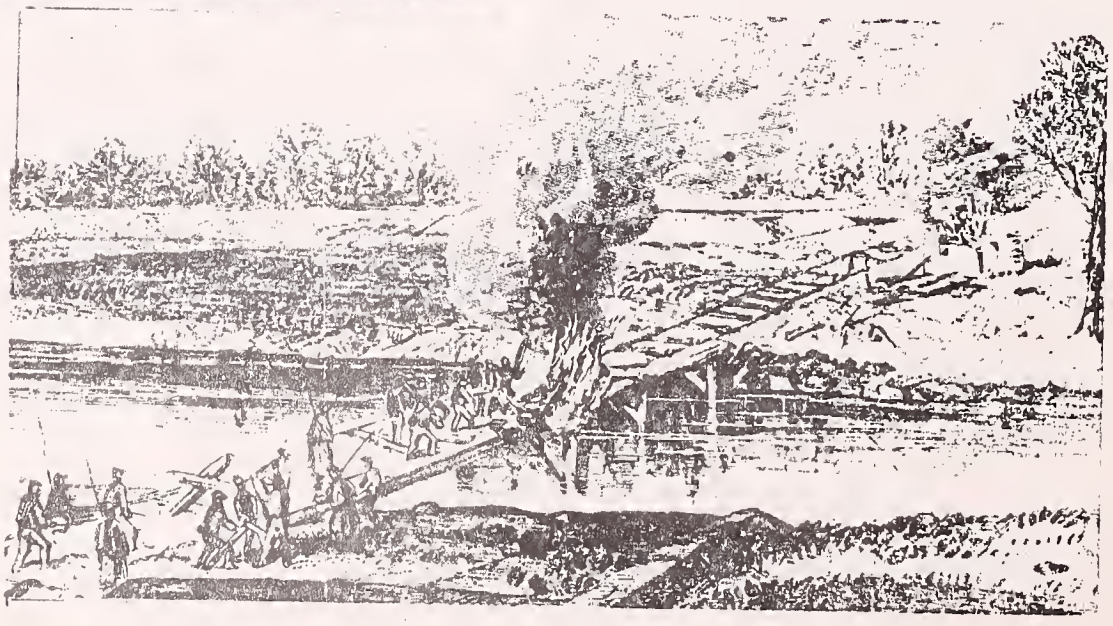
Irena Maria was born July 10, 1835 at Cazenovia, New York. On March 16, 1858, at Chattanooga, Tenn. she married Rezin Monroe Rawlings, who was born in Memphis on December 14, 1836. During the Civil War, Rezin was an ardent Confederate and served as a major on the staff of General Pillow. The Rawlings home in Chattanooga was burned to the ground by Union troops and their property was confiscated. The destruction may have been by men under General Sherman's command.

The Rawlings had 8 children, 2 born before the war, 2 during it and 4 afterward. Evidently Rezin had frequent furloughs or was stationed near home. He emerged unscathed as far as we know. Irena was the cousin of Albert and Jerome Ingersoll Prentiss of the Union Army.

Left: General Sherman at the Ruins of Atlanta

CSA General Pillow

Right: Burning Their Bridges Behind Them



The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Accidents Will And Do Happen

Introduction

The sudden shortening of the life of a dear one in a tragic accident often leaves the survivors stunned, momentarily unable to grasp reality. The Ingersolls suffered many such misfortunes. Some are described here.

Martha Ingersoll (27 S - No Chart - 4th Generation)

Martha was born November 5, 1670 at Casco Bay, Me. On January 10, 1695, she married Thomas Millet. Thomas, at age 47, and his brother-in-law, Elisha Ingersoll (21 S - Chart A - 4th Generation), age 38, died "being drowned at Casco Bay by a land flood, overflowing ye cottage and carrying it away" in the first week of March, 1722. Each victim left a large family.

David Ingersoll (35 S - Chart F - 4th Generation)

David was born September 1, 1695. On December 10, 1718, he married Mary Sargent. He was drowned on the fishing banks near the Isle of Shoals in 1730. He had five children.

Nathaniel Ingersoll (79 H - No Chart - 5th Generation)

Nathaniel was born February 19, 1783. He operated a grocery store in New York City. He drowned in the East River on April 16, 1824. He had five children; four survived him.

Elbert William Ingersoll (470ii W - No Chart - 8th Generation)
Gerald Ball Ingersoll (470v W - No Chart - 8th Generation)

Elbert and Gerald were sons of Frederick Whiton Ingersoll and Katherine Fulmer Bass Ingersoll, born January 3, 1883 and April 14, 1894, respectively. The brothers drowned in a boating accident on September 11, 1911 in Saginaw Bay, Bay City, Michigan.

Frederick Anthony Dudgeon (302ii H - No Chart - 6th Generation)

Frederick was born March 26, 1847, the son of Harriet Ingersoll Dudgeon and Anthony MacReynolds Dudgeon. Frederick drowned off the yacht "Mattie" opposite Grosse Ile in the Detroit River, May 26, 1875.

Jesse Foote Ingersoll (504ii W - No Chart - 8th Generation)

Jesse was born December 10, 1864. He drowned June 10, 1885 at Rouldaux Bridge while employed by the Rio Grande Rail Road. No details are available.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Accidents Will And Do Happen

Willard Delos Ingerson (711 H - No Chart - 8th Generation)

Willard was born August 11, 1877 at West Monroe, New York, He was killed in a railway accident at Lyons, N.Y. on August 2, 1904. Lyons is about 30 miles east of Rochester. Willard had two children.

Denzil Ingersoll (291 S - Chart E - 8th Generation)

Denzil was born December 16, 1843 in Leon, New York. He was killed March 9, 1895 from the explosion of a boiler. A farmer, he had eight children. Leon is in Leon Township, Cattaragus County, on the Mud River, 40 miles south of Buffalo. The entire township has a population of 1055, the village itself about 300.

Elizabeth Ingersoll (98 S - No Chart - 6th Generation)

Elizabeth was born in Boston about 1770. She married William Champney on May 18, 1795. William was killed at the launching of the frigate "Independence" in the Charlestown Navy Yard, on June 14, 1814.

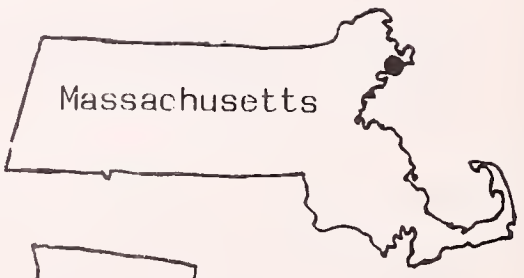
The Champneys had 11 children. At least 3 of them predeceased their father; one was born posthumously.

Isaac Ingersoll (113 S - Chart C - 6th Generation)

Isaac was born July 26, 1744 at Gloucester, Mass. He married Susanna Small on March 2, 1764. In 1776, Isaac was serving on the American privateer "Yankee Hero." This ship was engaged in battle with the British brig "Mildred." In the exchange of broadsides Isaac was killed by a six-pound shot. The "Yankee Hero", commanded by Samuel Ingersoll, sailed out of Salem. I have not been able to identify him.

Samuel Ingersoll (115 S - Chart C - 6th Generation)

Samuel was born December 15, 1753 in Gloucester. He married Lucy (Riggs) Woodbury on April 11, 1786. Samuel drowned at or near Squam on his return from a fishing trip, sometime before September 30, 1820. Samuel and Lucy had 6 children.



Susan Brown Ingersoll (342 S - No Chart - 8th Generation)

Susan was born December 12, 1836 at Cazenovia, N.Y. She married Halsey Fenimore Cooper on September 4, 1855. Susan was a cousin of Robert Green Ingersoll. At one time she was a teacher. Kate Douglas Wiggins was one of her kindergarten pupils. Halsey died in San Francisco 12/20/85. They had 4 children.

Susan and her eldest daughter Harriet, unmarried, were asphyxiated by gas in their dwelling in San Francisco on the night of December 10-11, 1896.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Accidents Will and Do Happen

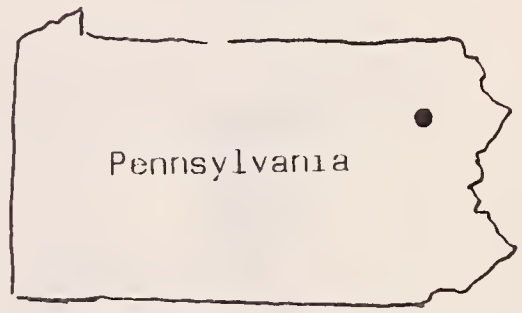
Johnson Ingersoll (108 H - No Chart - 5th Generation)

Johnson was born at Fort Stanwix (Rome, N.Y.) on September 8, 1801. He married Susanna Bull (1802-1892). He was drowned at Point Ontario, New York, on November 21, 1869 as he was returning from his annual fishing trip to Chaumont Bay, Lyme Township, Jefferson County, about 40 miles northeast of Oswego. He and Susanna had nine children.

Medifer Ingersoll (82 S - Chart F - 5th Generation)

Medifer was born August 3, 1729 at Gloucester, Mass. He married Dorothy Lowe. During the French and Indian War, Medifer was a sergeant in the expedition against Louisbourg in 1758. After being captured, he died on a French prison-ship, probably in April, 1759.

Myron Newberry Ingersoll (194 S - Chart E - 7th Generation)



Myron was born October 12, 1804 and died May 21, 1860 near Summit Hill, Pa. He was a railroad contractor and was killed "on the cars." We have neither date nor particulars.

Daniel Gridley Ingersoll (239 S - Chart A - 8th Generation)

Daniel was born in April, 1807, in Boston. He died of yellow fever at sea on October 21, 1837, in the West Indies. A master mariner, he commanded the brig "Arica" out of Boston. He had one son.

Jonathan Ingersoll (77 W - No Chart - 5th Generation)

Jonathan was born October 5, 1773 and was killed January 31, 1812 "while chopping in the forest" at Bethlehem, Conn., about 7 miles northwest of Waterbury. He had six children.

William Ingersoll (135iii W - No Chart - 7th Generation)

William was born November 10, 1826, a son of Moses and Clarissa Ingersoll. He was a railroad man and had several accidents before the last one. As yard-master at Ft. Scott, Kansas, he was making up a train and, in stepping back, his foot caught and he fell, the train running over him, severing both legs. He was found dead and was carried home to his bride of a few months. Ft. Scott is about 100 miles south of Kansas City, in Bourbon County.

Edward Reed Ingersoll (577 W - No Chart - 8th Generation)

Edward was born July 29, 1865 at Kenton, Ohio. he was accidently and fatally shot at Teal Gun Club, six miles from Mt. Vernon, Skagit County, Washington, while on a hunting trip. This club is about 70 miles north of Seattle. Edward had two children.

Minister Extraordinaire

Emma Ingersoll (350 H - No Chart - 6th Generation)

Emma Ingersoll was born in 1830 in Hamilton, Ohio and died in Crawfordsville, in in 1911. On March 4, 1849, she married James Wilson 1825-1868. They had a son.

Henry Lane Wilson (350 iii) was born November 3, 1856 in Crawfordsville. On October 24, 1884, he married Alice Vajen, who was born in 1860.

Benjamin Harrison

In 1889, Henry was appointed minister to Venezuela by President Benjamin Harrison, but he declined to serve.

McKinley

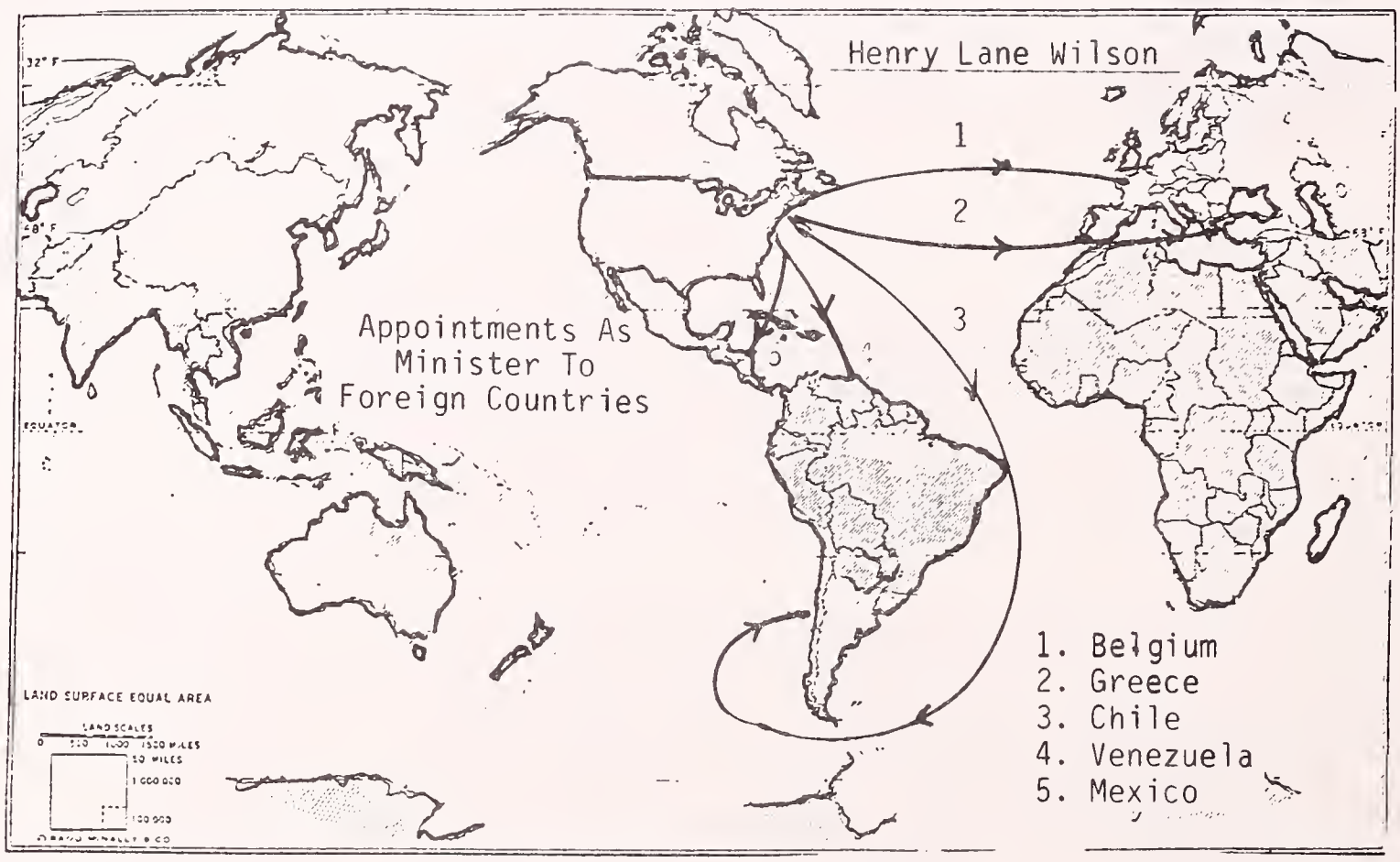
In 1896 he was appointed Minister to Chile by President William McKinley.

Theodore Roosevelt

In 1905 he was appointed Minister to Greece by President Theodore Roosevelt, and in the same year as Minister to Belgium.

Taft

In 1909 he was appointed Ambassador to Turkey by President William H. Taft, but transferred to Mexico before his name was submitted to the Senate. He retired from this post in 1914.



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Unfortunate Ingersolls

A Matter Of Luck

Most of us are fortunate in life, having to face only those obstacles which can be surmounted. Others do not fare as well, including a few Ingersolls described here, briefly.

Moss Ingersoll (36 W - No Chart - 4th Generation) was born June 9, 1763 at Ridgefield, Connecticut and died January 13, 1834 at Auburn, New York. In 1787 he married Ruth Smith, who died in 1817.

Moss was a deaf-mute, but he and Ruth found some means of communication since they had six children, all apparently normal.

Mary Ingersoll (62 S - No Chart - 5th Generation) was born October 12, 1721. She married a William Scales. They had a son:

> William Scales, born October 1742 at Bath, Me. died, unmarried, at Lincoln, Me. in 1799. He attended Harvard, studied Theology and graduated in 1771 at the age of 29. Evidently he was a young man of great promise. He did some preaching but had no definite pastorate. Ultimately he became insane, though perfectly harmless.

Ira Ingerson (156 H - No Chart - 6th Generation) was born May 25, 1783 in Little Nine Partners, Dutchess County, New York and died January 27, 1853 at Woodland, Michigan. On May 20, 1805, at Vergennes, Vermont he married, first, Sally Rounds, and on October 13, 1813, second, Sarah Bidwell.

When Ira was four his father died. The widow and her son moved to Vergennes, Vermont, a small town about 3 miles east of Lake Champlain and 50 miles south of the Quebec border. There she married again. Ira was "bound out" to a farmer in Vermont with the understanding that he would be cared for, sent to school, and boarded until he was 21. His mother then moved to Canada with her new husband. Ira never saw her or heard from her again. When Ira was fifteen he had received no schooling and, fed up with poor treatment, he left to shift for himself. There must have been some justice on his side, since his leaving the indenture was not contested.

We have no word of Ira's prosperity or lack of it. He had four children by his first wife, nine by his second, the last child 29 years younger than the first. If nothing else, he had a wealth of children.

Albert Ingersoll (642 W - No Chart - 9th Generation) was born in 1877. He married Annie Laura Risden on April 28, 1898. Their three daughters Alice, Nora and Elizabeth, ages 5 years, 3 years and 7 months, respectively, all died December 14, 1905 as the result of a fire. They had six other children, one older than the three girls, five younger.

William Ingersoll (91ii H - No Chart - 5th Generation) died September 15, 1859 in the Utica, N.Y. Insane asylum. We know nothing more.

The Ingersoll Family And The Johnstown Flood

Mary Caroline Ingersoll (382 W - No Chart - 7th Generation) was born in 1826 and died in 1874. In 1850 she married Daniel Dighton Morrell. They had a daughter:

> Marion Theodosia Morrell, born in 1851. She married, first, Nicholas J. Dinant, who died in 1875. Marion married, second, Reverend Alonzo Potter Diller. They were living on Locust Street, Johnstown, Pa. on May 31, 1889.

Lake Conemaugh

As a part of the Pennsylvania system of canals, a rock and earth dam was constructed in 1852, about 12 miles above Johnstown, on the Conemaugh River. This created a body of water known as South Fork Reservoir. When the canal system ceased to be an effective method of transportation and was abandoned, the Reservoir was sold. The purchasers were members of a group of private business men, intending to use the body of water as a resort and for hunting, fishing and boating. They enlarged the area covered into a lake about 3 miles long and, in some localities, 100 feet deep. Thenceforward it was called Lake Conemaugh.

The make-up of the dam was such that it deteriorated seriously from rain and weather. Initial efforts were made to patch and repair, but there was no program for continuing maintenance. There are conflicting accounts as to the responsibilities for failure to keep the dam in good shape, which we need not describe here.

This is an artist's conception of the Johnstown Flood, drawn in time to be published June 15, 1889 in Harper's Bazaar.

The Ingersoll Family And The Johnstown Flood

The Deluge

Drenching rains pounded all of Western Pennsylvania in the spring of 1889. This and the run-off from melting snow on the higher hills filled the normal drainage streams to capacity. The town of Johnstown was already trying to cope with minor local flooding as the rain came pelting down.

Then - disaster! On May 31st the crumbling walls of the dam were breached by the tremendous pressure of millions of gallons of water. W h o o s h! And the whole shebang let loose, releasing the water in great gouts, sweeping everything before it, overcoming temporary obstacles with great gulps, rushing, rushing, filling every crevice in the earth, the first burst looking for outlets while another million gallons came hurtling, bursting out of the lake.

Unstoppable, it scooped up houses, barns, outhouses, railroad cars and weakened bridges, telegraph poles and wires, fences, humans live and humans dead, livestock bellowing in terror until the water silenced them.

When this great mass of water and debris hit Johnstown it was probably at the peak of its momentum and power. It scraped, scoured and gouged a path 3 blocks wide as it swooped through the town, finally dumping the whole load in a 30 foot pile against the abutments of a stone railway bridge just below town. It was a 30 acre garbage dump, produced instantaneously.

Aftermath

The Johnstown Tribune, in January, 1890, published a list of the 2207 people who were known to have died in the flood.

Alonzo and Marion Dillers were on that list. It included two other Dillers, Isaac and Lola, who also lived on Locust Street. Mrs. Avery makes no mention of these persons. They may have been children of Alonzo and Marion, but were more likely to have been members of his family living with them.

Contributions for reconstructing the town came from hundreds of organizations and communities, in the United States and abroad. Queen Victoria sent her condolences to survivors. Florence Nightingale, 69 and ill, wrote a letter of sympathy to the town's citizens.

The dam was never rebuilt. The Conemaugh River is now a narrow stream, slow, placid, meandering.

Main Street, Johnstown, Pa.
June 1, 1889

Idiosyncrasies of Iconoclasts

Listeners To The Beats Of Other Drums

The title of this section may mislead some readers. I think it accurate, but the people listed would probably be called "odd balls' in today's social circles. Odd or not, they were certainly free thinkers. This is not an exclusive or complete list. There are others.

Uriah Nash Ingersoll (247 S - Chart B - 8th Generation)

Uriah was born April 1, 1838 at Columbia, Maine. He was described as "a dogmatic athiest, a man of very radical opinions on economics, ethics and the habits of life, seeing much in society's ways to condemn."

We have no idea if Uriah ever discussed things with his contemporary, distant and sympathetic cousin, Robert Green Ingersoll. If they had talked, it would have been an interesting conversation for eaves-dropping.

Frank Herbert Ingersoll (359 S - Chart B - 9th Generation)

Frank was born April 4, 1867 at Columbia, Maine, son of Uriah, just above. It is obvious that Frank's father influenced his thinking. He was agnostic in religious views and his political convictions were socialistic.

Electa Ingersoll (21v W - No Chart - 5th Generation)

Electa was born February 13, 1765, the daughter of that John Ingersoll of Westfield who was thought to have Loyalist leanings during the Revolution. There's more about him in these pages.

Electa never married and died February 18, 1839. "She was somewhat of an eccentric character and is credited (sic) with having been an opium eater, but she was full of fun and smart as a whip."

Moses Ingersoll (293 W - No Chart - 7th Generation)

Moses was born May 2, 1818 in Cayuga County, New York and died October 6, 1898 at Watertown, Michigan. He was a total abstainer and an old-school Presbyterian.

He voted for the first time a Whig ticket and afterwards the Republican, proud of the fact, as his father and six brothers were all Democrats.

Bravo! Moses!

Ann Ingersoll (81 H - No Chart - 5th Generation)

Ann was born June 29, 1789. On November 23, 1812 she married Edward Brush (20iii[b]), the grandson of Deborah Ingersoll Brush (20 H - No Chart - 4th Generation). Ann's grandfather Simon Ingersoll was her husband's great grandfather.

Ann and Edward had six children the youngest posthumously. All six were baptized simultaneously on September 2, 1828, three years after the death of their father. I guess Ann had the last word.

Ingersolls Victimized

Fatalities Only

Here are a few instances of Ingersolls who were killed by others in the commission of violent crimes. It is likely that other Ingersolls suffered from other criminal actions with less than fatal consequences.

Charles Ingersoll (298 S - Chart F - 8th Generation)

Charles was born in January, 1819 in New York City. He graduated from Columbia in 1839 and from Harvard Law School in 1841. After the civil War, in poor health, he resided in Kansada, Kansas, about 3 miles west of Lawrence. On January 29, 1875, in Kansada, he was shot and killed by a young colored boy and robbed of his wallet and a valuable gold watch. There is no indication that the young man was ever apprehended and punished.

William Wallace Ingersoll (179ii W - No Chart - 7th Generation)

William Wallace was born January 10, 1830 in Guilford, New York. On December 16, 1895 "he was shot on the streets of Chattanooga, Tennessee by a masked highwayman. Instead of throwing up his hands and suffering himself to be robbed, he showed fight and was instantly killed. His murderer escaped capital punishment but was sent to the penitentiary for twenty-one years; however, he was pardoned by Governor Taylor after a few years on account of consumption."

Joshua R. Ingersoll (187ix S - Chart E - 9th Generation)

Joshua was born October 6, 1829. He was found murdered in Honolulu, Sandwich Islands in May, 1875, where he had charge of "convict Chinamen."

Helen Bell Ingersoll (655 W - No Chart - 9th Generation)

Helen was born July 16, 1861 in Buchanan County, Iowa. On November 8, 1879, in Smith County, Kansas, she married Charles Frederick Berry who was murdered in Mexico in March, 1894. His body was found in Sinaloa.

Ezra Ingersoll (40 H - Chart I - 4th Generation)

Ezra was born November 12, 1770, the fourteenth child of Josiah Ingersoll (9- H). See Pot Pourri of Miscellany.

"He was a man of considerable means as he left a large fortune behind him. A family tradition recounts his death by assassination. He carried large amounts of money on his person and was attacked by foot-pads for what was on his person."

This evidently happened in New York City. The date is not known. In 1792 he married Elizabeth Lockwood (1770-1820). They had 8 children, the youngest of whom was born in 1812.

Give Me Land, Give Me Land, Lots of Land

Don't Fence Me In

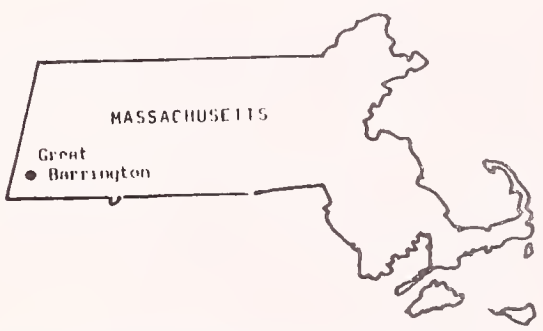
Several Ingersolls, spouses and children, owned a lot of land, at least temporarily. A few are listed here with an indication of the extent of their holdings. I doubt that such large tracts remain in the family today; they've been reduced by distribution to heirs, bankruptcy or simple sale. The order in which they appear here is of no significance.

Chester Ingersoll (222 S - Chart H - 7th Generation)

Chester was born in 1789, probably in Hardwick, Mass. and he died September 2, 1849 at San Francisco, California. In 1832 he bought the whole township of Plainfield, Illinois for $1.25 an acre. Two years later he laid out the town, named it and sold lots to settlers.

He donated land in Plainfield for the Methodist and Baptist churches. The acreage he originally owned is not known but it was quite extensive. In 1847 Chester, his foot itchy, helped to organize a wagon train and set out for California. He left Plainfield on April 5 and arrived in Sacramento on October 15 of that year, 193 days on the road.

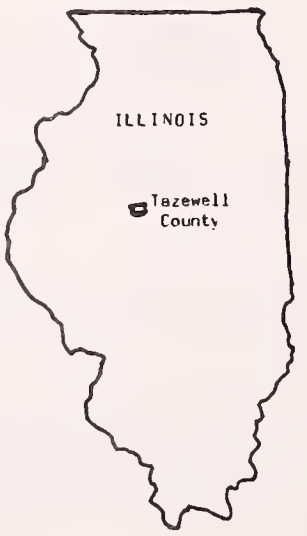
William Ingersoll (26 W - Chart J - 4th Generation)



William was born in Springfield, Mass. on April 1, 1724. In 1769 he moved to Great Barrington and settled in the Hopland district.

A quote, "His farm consisted of 1000 acres stretching along the Housatonic from the quarry to South Lee. His seven sons, on coming to maturity, settled around him on some part of his ample domain."

Alexander Deming Ingersoll (308 W - No Chart - 7th Generation)



Alexander was born in 1825 in Grafton, Ohio. On February 22, 1853 he married Sarah Van Orman. They had 10 children.

He was a prosperous stock raiser in Tazewell County, Illinois and at one time he owned 2658 acres of land (a bit more than 4 square miles). The Tazewell County History said, "There is little more land adjoining him he don't own yet." That's Illinois grammar but it is obvious that Alexander was respected by his neighbors. If I were to express the same idea (and you know I will) I'd probably say, "The only land he wants is the land next to his."

Moses Ingersoll (48 W - Chart J - 5th Generation)

Moses was born December 10, 1755 in Great Barrington, Mass. He died February 28, 1834. He moved to Owego, N.Y. in 1790 and settled on a government grant of 1000 acres. This tract has long since been broken up.

Give Me Land, Give Me Land, Lots of Land

John Ingersoll (226 S - No Chart - 7th Generation)

John was born in 1795 in Brooklyn, Connecticut and died at Ilion, New York in 1844. He married, first, Gertrude Shoemaker (1801-1828), second, Adaline Palmer (1801-1852), and third Almira Traver.

For a time John was in business in Utica as a blacksmith, but was wiped out by a fire. Later he kept a public house known as Old Checkered Tavern in German Flats north of the Erie Canal, with a partner known as John Littlejohn. He made a lot of money in this business and purchased from Herkimer County a large tract of land upon which the town of Ilion now stands. He paid $17 an acre and sold it off in village lots. John left a large estate which was tied up in litigation for 52 years.

Why? Ponder these facts. John had 3 children by his first wife, two of whom predeceased him. The third married a doctor and lived until 1905. John also had a son by his second wife; this marriage evidently ended in divorce and this second wife and her son survived him. The third wife must have survived John. A firm of lawyers could live off this case for years, since there was evidently plenty of capital to feed on.

Hannah Ingersoll (43 H - Chart I - 4th Generation)

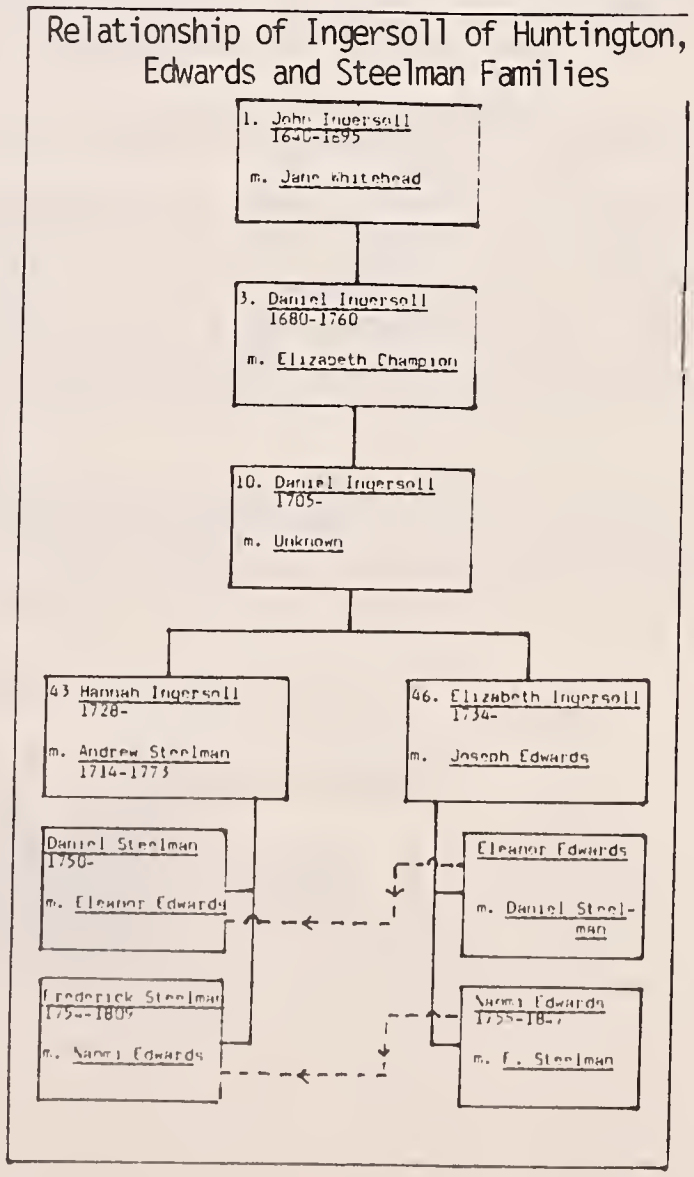
Hannah was born about 1728. On July 3, 1747 she married Andrew Steelman who was born in 1719 and died in 1773.

Andrew owned large tracts of land including the greater part of Absecon Beach, on which Atlantic City was later built.

Hannah and Andrew had eight children, including Daniel Steelman (1750- ?) who married Eleanor Edwards, the daughter of Hannah's sister Elizabeth and her husband Joseph Edwards.

A few year's later Daniel's younger brother Frederick Steelman married Eleanor's younger sister Naomi. The accompanying chart may clarify this, and God know's it needs clarifying.

It is interesting to note that Hannah's father Daniel (10 H - No Chart - 3 rd Generation) inherited from his father Daniel (3 H) " a certain tract of land situated in Gloucester County, New Jersey, on the northeast side of Tuckahoe River, containing by estimate 1000 acres."



The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Family Coincidences

Josiah Ingersoll (183 S - Chart D - 7th Generation)

Josiah was born July 3, 1793 at Boston and died in 1870. He married Hannah Smith, who was born in 1796. Josiah served in a Massachusetts regiment in the War of 1812. No one knows why, but he and his descendants were known as Ingersons.

Coincidence is the only reason for especially mentioning Josiah. One of the paternal great-grandfathers of the compiler of these archives was John Michael Klingensmith (1820-1896) who married Hannah Smith (1817-1908).

John Preston Ingersoll (331 S - Chart H - 8th Generation)

John was born June 22, 1832 at Frankfort Hill, New York and died January 9, 1899. On November 28, 1858 he married, at Frankfort Center, Sarah A. Whitfield, who was born April 25, 1836 at Stockport, Cheshire, England.

This is the same English town in which this compiler's maternal great-grandfather, Benjamin Fiddler, was born in 1838.

William Henry Ingersoll (411 S - No Chart - 9th Generation)

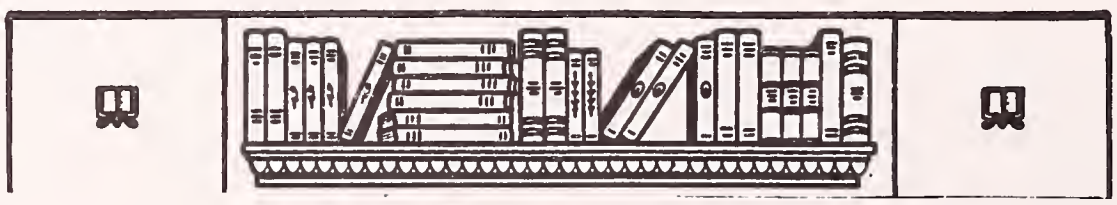
William was born April 8, 1833 at Gloucester, Mass. and died March 6, 1884 at Hyde Park, Mass. He married, July 3, 1853, Sarah Lawton, who died July 12, 1891. William was a mariner.

Their daughter, Josephine F. Ingersoll (411v S - No Chart - 10th Generation) was born July 16. 1862 in New Bedford. On October 13, 1887 she married one Frank L. Wiswell, age 23, born in Canton, Mass.,the son of Timothy and Julia A. Wiswell. I have been unable to trace these Wiswells.

Wesley Morris Ingersoll (436i S - No Chart - 10th Generation)

Wesley was born in 1891. He became Sales Manager of Library Bureau Company, a manufacturer of office and library furniture. This company merged with many others in 1925 to form Remington Rand Inc. which, in turn, merged with Sperry Corporation in 1955 to make Sperry Rand Corporation. The compiler of these scrupulously accurate and excruciatingly interesting stories was an employee of Sperry Rand or its predecessors for over 48 years, the last ten as a corporate officer. Eureka!

Since I retired Sperry Rand Corporation was renamed as Sperry Corporation (again) and then merged with Burroughs Corporation to form Unisys Corporation. The library furniture business was sold to its employees and is presently prospering under the old name - Library Bureau Company.



The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Physiognomy, Posture and Presence

Introduction

The Ingersoll genealogies I have read say very little of the physical appearances of the male members of the family. Occasionally an Ingersoll lady is described in glowing and perhaps extravagant terms.

The characters, abilities, attitudes and deeds of many of these men are praised often and sometimes quite eloquently. In the cases of obituaries and eulogies the language may be quite saccharine. We have pictures of Jared I, Jared II, Grace, Robert G. and perhaps a few others. But for the most part we don't know how these men looked, handsome, ugly or nondescript like most of us.

Such As They Are

The few descriptions I have found (and which do not appear elsewhere in these pages) are listed here. These are quotations except when noted to the contrary.

Captain John Ingersoll (144 S - Chart G - 6th Generation)(1756-1840)

> "... 5 feet 9 inches tall, complexion light ..."

Jared Ingersoll (39 W - Chart J - 4th Generation)(1749-1840)

> "He was of good height, three or four inches short of six feet, square of flesh and perfectly well made and erect. His complexion was fair and his hair light colored and his features not large or salient. His carriage was remarkable."

John Ingersoll (45 W - No Chart - 5th Generation)(1769-1840)

> "He was tall and thin with a mild blue eye and hair prematurely white."

Peter Ingersoll (49 W - No Chart - 5th Generation)(1765- ?)

> "... stature 5 feet, 8 inches, complexion dark, hair dark."

Edward Payson Ingersoll (337 W - No Chart - 7th Generation)(1834-1907)

> "... is above medium height, with a robust frame."

Oliver Roland Ingersoll (455 W - Chart J - 8th Generation)(1837-1914)

> "He was physically and mentally a big man."

George Baine Ingersoll (473 W - No Chart - 8th Generation)(1867- ?)

> "... is a man of commanding presence, being 6 feet 2 inches in height and has dark eyes and hair..."

Lucius Ingersoll (274ii W - No Chart - 8th Generation)(1838-1868)

> According to his discharge papers from Civil War Service he was 5 feet 9 inches high, with dark eyes, brown hair, dark complexion.

Physiognomy, Posture and Presence

Such As They Are, Continued

Seth Ingersoll (274iv W - No Chart - 8th Generation)(1841-1863)

According to the papers covering his discharge from Civil War service he was 5 feet 9 inches high, and had a fair complexion, blue eyes and auburn hair.

Isaac Weber Ingersoll (207 H - No Chart - 6th Generation)(1812-1881)

> "... was a strong well built man, about 5 feet 9 inches in height and weighing 180 pounds. In complexion he was fair with light hair and dark brown eyes and a full ruddy face which beamed with good nature and jollity.
>
> "In his youth he was a fine wrestler and would take falls out of many opponents of greater size and weight. In his later years his gray beard encircled his face like a fringe and he greatly resembled Horace Greeley who wore his hair the same way."

His wife, Lydia (Cook) Ingersoll seems to have once confused a picture of Horace with a picture of Isaac. Now Isaac may have been a good and noble man, but he took no prizes for facial beauty, with or without a beard. Shown below are three pictures of Horace, one with a beard, one with no beard and an ax, and another a caricature by Thomas Nast. None of them is complimentary.

Horace Greeley by Thomas Nast, 187:

Isaac seems to have been pleased with the resemblance he saw. Evidently Lydia was not too disturbed by it. But then we don't know what she looked like, do we? Each of them must have had some occasional attraction to the other, since they had 12 children. The youngest was born in 1851, the oldest twenty years earlier.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Music, Maestro, Please

Singers Extraordinaire

Lucinda Ingersoll (132 W - No Chart - 6th Generation) was born June 2, 1784, died September 20, 1825. On September 16, 1799 she married Lee Thomas Chadwick, born March 3, 1777, died in September, 1837.

Lee Thomas had a fine tenor voice and led the choir at the church in Northville, New York for forty years.

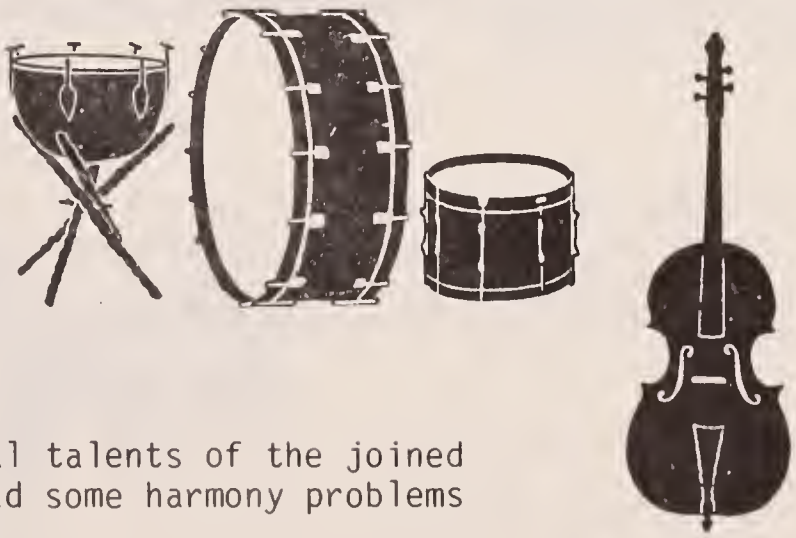
Their third child, Lucinda Chadwick (132iii W - No Chart - 7th Generation) is described as "a beautiful woman and a sweet singer, her voice having a compass of three octaves; sang to a high D with perfect ease."

Question: which two people sang most of the solos at the Northville Church from October 1797 to September 1837? Do you suppose the congregation might have longed to hear, occasionally, a baritone, an alto or a basso profundo?

Here is a picture of some choir singers of that time in action. The guy on the right is going full blast, while the others seem tentative. Is that brother Moses in the rear, left, waiting to get in some licks on his double bass? More about him below.

Moses Ingersoll (135 W - Chart I - 6th Generation) was born February 15, 1790 and died September 1, 1855. He was a younger brother of Lucinda Ingersoll above. On June 18, 1812 at Genoa, New York, Moses married Clarissa Hooker, born April 7, 1790 and died November 9, 1851.

Moses taught school a great deal and music much more. He was a very fine singer, leading the choir (not in Northville), played the bass viol and taught the drum. I'll bet the neighbors loved to hear his pupils at their lessons. Moses and Clarissa had seven children who lived to maturity.



When the children were little many would come in the evening to learn to beat, but the noise never disturbed the little sleepers. (Compiler's question - Did they ever have the kid's hearing checked?) When Moses died, and his family could not sing in the choir, they had to ask a choir from another town to sing at the funeral.

There is a note that Moses and his family visited relatives in Michigan and the musical talents of the joined families was much enjoyed. I'll bet they had some harmony problems

Music, Maestro, Please

Singers Extraordinaire, Continued

with Lee Thomas Chadwick's tenor and Lucinda Chadwick's h-i-g-h soprano mixed with Moses' drum or double bass.

Sally Ingersoll (138 W - No Chart - 6th Generation), a younger sister of Lucinda and Moses, was born March 3, 1795 at Lee, Mass. and died in September, 1835 in Auburn, New York. She was married on June 17, 1813 at Lee to Samuel Chadwick, born at Lee August 23, 1789 and died August 3, 1851 at Farmington, Michigan. He was a younger brother of Thomas who married Sally's older sister Lucinda. Samuel was a silversmith and a maker of musical instruments. He invented the seraphim, a fore-runner of the cabinet organ, long since extinct.

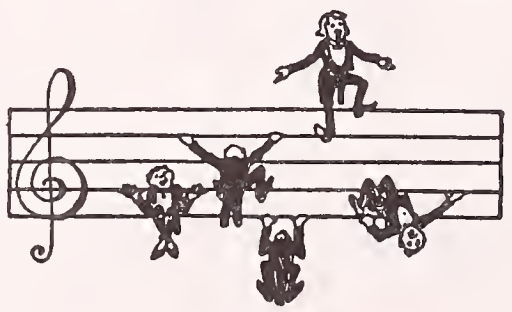
William Ingersoll (141 W - No Chart - 6th Generation) was born December 22, 1801 in Lee, Mass., a younger brother of Lucinda, Moses and Sally. He died May 26, 1873 at Oberlin, Ohio.

He was a missionary and a seller of religious books. He is recalled "as a sweet singer, excelling in the rendering of sacred melodies and hymns, and as a man without an enemy on earth."

Alvan Hyde Ingersoll (142 W - No Chart - 6th Generation) was a twin of William and a brother of all the above. He was born December 22, 1801 in Lee, Mass. and died December 23, 1864 at Rochester, N.Y. Reverend Ingersoll was a Congregational minister and began his first pastorate in Buffalo, N.Y. He was said, by Lowell Mason to be "the sweetest singer in America."

Elihu Parsons Ingersoll (143 W - No Chart - 6th Generation) was born September 20, 1804 at Lee and died March 24, 1877 in Kansas. He was the youngest brother of all the sweet-singing Ingersolls listed here. He was a graduate of Yale and the first Professor of Music at Oberlin College. He was a Congregationalist minister, like his brother Alvan. Elihu was also the composer of many hymns.

David Ingersoll (53 W - Chart J - 5th Generation) was the father of all of the above. He was born December 1, 1759 at Great Barrington. On December 13, 1781 he married Sarah Parsons, whose mother's ancestry could be traced to Cedric and Charlemagne. All of their children must have inherited their musical talents from their mother, since, as far as we know, David could not sing or play a note. There is another story about David in these papers somewhere but it isn't about music. Check the Index if you like.



Inventors' Corner

Introduction

Many Ingersolls had inquisitive minds in literature, law, jurisprudence, religion, husbandry and even in waging war. There were others who turned their talents to developing things which would enable people to do things more easily, more quickly, more accurately. Some of these inventive people are listed here with some description of their accomplishments. There are others which have been omitted because of space limitations or the compiler's whimsy.

Simon Ingersoll (432 H - No Chart - 7th Generation)

Simon was born March 3, 1818 in Stanwich, Connecticut, the son of Alexander S. and Caroline (Carll) Ingersoll. He had only a country-school education but early on he was known to be "an all-around ingenious mechanic."

He married, first, Sarah B. Smith, who was born February 27, 1820 and died March 2, 1859. She was the daughter of Arba and Hannah Smith. Simon and Sarah moved to Astoria, Long Island and for the next twenty years he was engaged in truck farming.

In 1858 he returned to Connecticut and patented a special type of rotating shaft for a steam engine. About that time he built and demonstrated on the streets of Stamford, a steam wagon which was much ridiculed. His son called this the world's first automobile. People thought it too dangerous, but Simon declared that one day such contraptions would be as common as wagons and horses. He was right, of course, but was ahead of his time. Nothing came of it.

Simon obtained a number of patents in the 1860's which he assigned to others for money to support his family and to allow him to continue experimenting. In 1871 he developed and patented a rock drill and improvements, all of which he sold to Jose F. Navarro, who formed the Ingersoll Rock Drill Company which was merged eventually into Ingersoll Rand Company.

Simon then established a machine shop in Stamford where he continued his inventive work. Between 1873 and 1893 he was granted 16 patents on rock drills and accessories, and four patents for a gun and projectile for throwing life-lines at sea. He was unable to realize any great financial return from any of these but others prospered from them. He was virtually penniless when he died.

His second wife was Frances Hoyt of Stamford, who survived him. Simon had seven children by his first wife, two by his second.

Ione May Ingersoll (486i H - No Chart - 8th Generation)

Ione was born September 8, 1882, the daughter of Granville Peter Ingersoll (486 H) and Dora Cathryne (Swartz) Ingersoll of Caneadea, Allegany County, New York. On August 27, 1908 she married Ralph Lewis Hinman. Ralph and his father Arthur V. Hinman were the inventors of the Hinman Milking Machine which was used extensively in this country and abroad.

Robert G. Ingersoll, His Father and His Brothers

Abbreviated Prologue

Background information is necessary fairly to present a vignette of Robert Green Ingersoll's character and personality. His father John seems to have been a narrow-minded, dogmatic man who loved his children dearly but punished them severely if they violated his precepts. Robert's brothers, older than he but under the same rigorous discipline, may have acted as buffers and protected him to some degree, for which he was everlastingly grateful.

The Father - John Ingersoll (217 S - Chart H - 7th Generation)

John Ingersoll was born July 5, 1792 at Rupert, N.H., and died May 1, 1859 at Peoria, Illinois. He attended Middlebury College, received private instruction in Theology and became a Protestant minister. After preaching in New Haven, he was at the Broadway Tabernacle in New York City for one year. For some time he was a traveling evangelist in western New York, then moved to Peoria, where he lived and preached for the remainder of his life. He had a reputation as an eloquent speaker and for delivering long, long sermons with unflagging enthusiasm. No mention is made of the enthusiasm of his listeners.

(After his father's death, Robert said that he learned the 'rudiments of ignorance' at Middlebury College.)

His first wife was Mary Livingston, of the same family but not a direct descendant of Robert Livingston who waged private wars with David Ingersoll (13 W - Chart J - 3rd Generation) and John Conrad Weiser, the writer's ancestor.

John and Mary had three boys and two girls. Robert has said of his father that he whipped his children fiercely to keep them out of hell, but was a man of great tenderness and loved them to insanity. My guess is that it was a quiet household; no one dared raise his voice, not even Mary.

Mary died in 1835. Some time later, John, at age 60, married for his second wife, a widow with two children. This marriage ended in divorce. John married, third, Frances Langdon Willard, age 55. Frances died in 1854. Somehow, multiple marriages do not seem to fit John.

A Brother - John Livingston Ingersoll (317 S - Chart H - 8th Generation)

John Livingston Ingersoll was born December 20, 1823 at Pittsford, Rutland County, Vermont, son of John and Mary (Livingston) Ingersoll. He studied medicine, became a physician, moved to Wisconsin, established a practice in Prospect and pursued it for over 50 years. That's a lot of belly-aches, broken bones, births, aches and pills.

On April 25, 1851 he married Teresa Chamberlin Cheney of Prospect. Now you know why he moved there. Of their seven children, four lived to adulthood. Teresa died in 1893, John in 1898.

Robert Green Ingersoll - His Father and His Brothers

Another Brother - Ebon Clarke Ingersoll (319 S - Chart H - 8th Generation)

Ebon Clarke Ingersoll was the fourth child of John and Mary (Livingston) Ingersoll, born December 12, 1831 at Oneida, N.Y. He became a lawyer and practiced in Gallatin County, Illinois and was elected a state legislator in 1856. In 1862 he was an unsuccessful candidate for Congress, defeated by J.C. Allen. He was appointed in 1864 to fill the unexpired term of Owen Lovejoy, deceased, in the 38th Congress and subsequently was elected to three consecutive terms through 1871. For a time he was associated with his brother Robert in law practice in Peoria and later in Washington.

On November 27, 1857 he married Mary Carter. They had three children, two of whom lived to maturity. Ebon died in Washington, D.C. on May 31, 1879.

Robert Green Ingersoll - Himself

Robert Green Ingersoll (320 S - Chart H - 8th Generation) was born August 31, 1833 in the Congregational Church Parsonage at Dresden, New York, in Yates County. He was the fifth and last child of Reverend John and Mary (Livingston) Ingersoll. The Green middle name was after Beriah Green, a friend of his father. His mother died when Robert was about two-and-a-half years old. As a baby he was called Robin but eventually he earned the nicknames Fighting Bob, The Fighting Atheist, The Great Agnostic and The Illustrious Infidel. (Note: the people who dreamed up these sobriquets obviously spent little time or thought sorting out the meanings.)

Robert was an early rebel against formal religion as understood and proclaimed by his father, who was an advocate of applying Bible lessens with a strap on the backside, and emphasizing them with additional hard licks to be sure they were remembered. The absence of TLC after his mother died may have contributed to his being 'different.' He could read at 5 and as soon as he could read well enough Robert swept voraciously through his father's library, reading everything, and was soured by what he read. But he did discover Shakespeare and Robert Burns, life-long delights.

Lasting Impressions

Robert is and was then known to most people as a noisy but pleasant atheist, agnostic or infidel, whichever. These same people forget that he was a brilliant lawyer, a soldier, a teacher, a failed politician, a disappointed seeker of public office, an abolitionist, the world's most dynamic orator,

Robert G. Ingersoll, His Father And His Brothers

Lasting Impressions, continued

an author, a champion of women's rights and suffrage, and no shrinking violet either. When he spoke people listened to his powerful, resonant voice, always under control, charged with authority. Perhaps they didn't always agree with what he said, but they liked the way he said it, and listened.

Ante-Bellum Years and a Soldier's Misfortunes

With no formal education Robert read law and in 1854 he was admitted to the Illinois bar, age 21. He practiced law with his brother Ebon Clarke Ingersoll (319 S) in Shawneeville, later in Peoria and, much later, in Washington, D.C. In 1860 Robert was an unsuccessful candidate for Congress. When the Civil War came in 1861, he was active in raising a volunteer regiment, the Eleventh Illinois Cavalry, and was appointed, or elected, Colonel, with no military experience. (This was not unusual at that time. Some over-night officers were completely out of place but others were competent, patriotic, brave.)

Nathan Bedford Forrest

Robert acquitted himself well in the Tennessee Valley campaigns but was captured with many of his men at the Battle of Shiloh in 1862 by forces under the command of Nathan Bedford Forrest (who got there "fustest" with the "mostest", and whose standing order was, "Charge, both ways!") Forrest had the reputation of being the most able and successful of the Confederate cavalry commanders then surviving.

Robert was paroled, returned to Illinois and resigned his commission in accordance with his parole agreement.

Marriage

On February 13, 1862, Robert married Eva Amelia Parker, who was born at Groveland, Illinois on May 4,1841, the daughter of Benjamin Wild and Harriet E. (Lyon) Parker. All of the accounts I have read indicate that they were happy together and led irreproachable home lives. They had two daughters and gave the middle name Robert to each. I can find no explanation for this oddity nor do I have any reason to comment upon it. The girls were:

Eva Robert Ingersoll, born September 22, 1863, who married Walston H. Brown.
Maud Robert Ingersoll, born November 4, 1864, who married Reverend Wallace M. Probasco.

Early Taste For Politics

Shortly after his release from the army, Robert became active in politics and managed the campaigns of Ebon Clarke Ingersoll for Congress from 1864 to 1871. He was appointed Attorney General of Illinois in 1866 and served two years in that position. In 1871 he made a brief run for Governor of Illinois but could not obtain his party's nomination.

From 1862 onward Robert strongly proclaimed his belief in free thinking and became a staunch defender of the scientific theories of Charles Darwin and T.H. Huxley. He

Robert G. Ingersoll, His Father And His Brothers

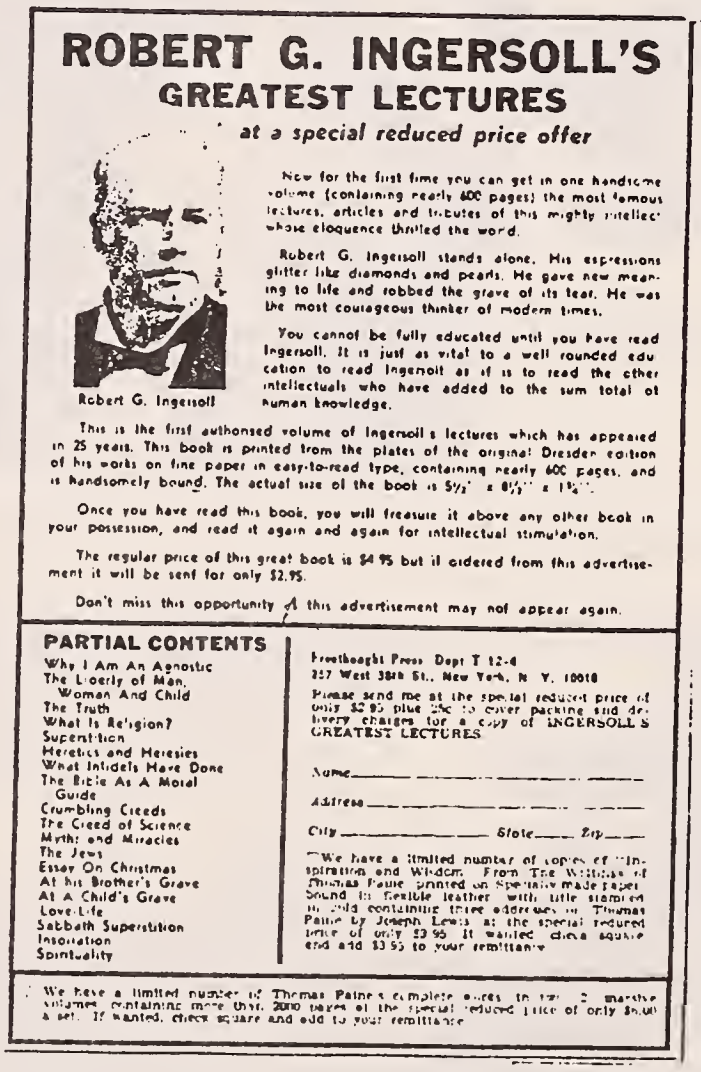
Early Taste For Politics, continued

declared himself an "agnostic," This was a brand new word introduced by Huxley in 1870, which seemed to fit his ideas exactly.

Robert was nobody's fool and I'm sure he was well aware that his agnosticism and beliefs regarding evolution placed him in the "no-no" file of most voters - regardless of party. But while he couldn't even buy an election for himself, he could and did speak long, loudly and successfully for other candidates.

Lecturing

A few of his anti-religious lectures were so well received that Robert began to turn his energies and eloquence in that direction. Perhaps his audiences were initially hostile, but he found that he could charm them, alter their viewpoints, get them to listen carefully to what he had to say, and simultaneously satisfy his own needs, massage his ego and fatten his pocketbook. No fool he!



He criss-crossed the country many times in the trains available, accepting the discomforts, missing his home and bed, and probably loving every moment of it. There was applause here, the thrill of swaying a crowd. How sweet it is! Show biz!

In Full Bloom

At the Republican National Convention in Cincinnati in 1876, Robert eloquently nominated James G. Blaine for the Presidency. His speech was nationally acclaimed and established Ingersoll's reputation as the world's greatest orator.

James G. Blaine John A. Logan

Demosthenes, move over! Mark Antony, make room! I'll quote the last paragraph of his speech which is a typical political speech full of hyperbole and bull. The modern nominators sound just like this.

"Like an armed warrior, like a plumed knight, James G. Blaine marched down the halls of the American Congress and threw his shining lance full and fair against the brazen forehead of every traitor to his country and every maligner of his fair reputation... Gentlemen of the convention: in the name of the great republic... in the name of all her defenders and supporters; in the name of all her soldiers living; in the name of all her soldiers that died upon the field of battle... Illinois nominates for the next President of this country that prince of parliamentarians, that leader of leaders, James G. Blaine."

Robert Green Ingersoll, His Father And His Brothers

In Full Bloom, continued

In spite of all this hullabaloo the delegates liked Ingersoll's speech better then they did his candidate. Rutherford B. Hayes won the party's nomination and eventually won the election. Robert, a true party worker, campaigned for Hayes from Maine to Mississippi and probably swayed a vote or two. After his inauguration Hayes offered to nominate Robert as Minister to Germany. Ingersoll declined, knowing full well that the Senate, in its wisdom or lack of it, would deny him confirmation. Maybe Hayes knew that too. Sometime later Robert campaigned actively for Garfield and McKinley.

1876

Successful Years

1883

Ingersoll moved his office to Washington in 1879 and found that his talents were always in demand, whether in law, lecturing or writing. His reputation grew. A copy of an advertisement for a book of his lectures appears on the previous page. This offer was made about 1925, indicating a continuing demand for his stuff.

In 1885 he moved his law practice to the nation's money center in Wall Street. In spectacular fashion, he represented prominent Republicans from Arkansas who were accused of mail fraud in the assignment of rural delivery routes. He won this "Star Routes" case to polish his fame. Other lucrative cases came his way and in one instance he charged a fee of $100,000, an unheard of amount in those days. His client refused to pay while Robert was alive. After his death, his widow Eva sued, took the case to the Supreme Court and won.

1892

As his law work flourished, so did his lecturing. He seems to have had unlimited energy when travel was slow and tiring. But this was a gold mine he industriously exploited. In 1884 he earned $25,000 in two months of barnstorming. That sounds like small potatoes when compared with the mega-buck payments to today's singers who have voices not unlike a poorly tuned Jew's Harp played off-key by someone tone deaf and adnoidal, amplified. But this was big money 100 years ago.

Robert Green Ingersoll, His Father And His Brothers

Successful Years, continued

Grandpa Ingersoll with Eva and Robert, 1898.

This is a picture of Grandpa Ingersoll with his grandchildren. He was extraordinarily fond of them and they seemed to reciprocate. This was taken in 1898.

At the right is a drawing of Robert speaking in a tent at the funeral of Walt Whitman in Harleigh Cemetery, Camden, N.J. on March 30, 1892.

The Ingersolls lived at 89 Fifth Avenue from 1886 to 1888, and after 1888 at 400 Fifth Avenue.

On November 13, 1889 their daughter Eva was married to Walston Hill Brown. He was a wealthy railroad builder. He gave Eva, as a wedding present, an estate overlooking the Hudson River at Dobb's Ferry. The estate was called Walston; it had a far reaching view. There were 14 bedrooms and 4 baths on the second floor.

The Ingersolls lived at Walston from May to October and at 400 Fifth Avenue from November to April. Walston and Eva Brown lived at 400 Fifth Avenue in the summer and at Walston in the winter. An interesting and convenient arrangement.

Last Days

While lecturing in Janesville, Minn. in 1896, Robert suffered a heart attack. Within a short time he was back at it, full blast, all out, hammer and tongs, tooth and nail.

Robert Green Ingersoll, His Father And His Brothers

Last Days, continued

He died on Friday, July 21, 1899, from angina pectoris, at Walston, his summer home at Dobb's Ferry. On July 25, 1899, at four o'clock, a private funeral service was held in Robert's bedroom. His body lay on a bier, covered with a linen cloth, banked with flowers. A single red rose was placed on his chest. His family and about 40 friends were present. There were three readings from his works, given by prominent friends. There were no prayers, no sermon, no eulogy.

Robert's body was cremated on July 27, 1899 at Fresh Pond, Long Island. The ashes were placed in an ovoid urn. One surface was inscribed 'Robert G. Ingersoll'. the other 'L'urne, La Ponssiere, Le Coeur, Le Souvenir.'

This urn was kept at Walston until the death of Mrs. Ingersoll in 1923, and then at the home of her daughter, Maud Probasco. In 1932, the ashes of Robert and Eva were interred under a granite monument in Arlington National Cemetery.

Memorials

A seven-and-a-half foot statue of Robert Ingersoll was erected at the Perry Avenue entrance to Glen Oaks Park, Peoria on October 29, 1911. This work was designed, sculptured and cast by Fritz Triebel. He modeled the face from pictures provided by the family. Robert's clothes were used to determine his size and proportions.

At Dresden, New York, on August 11, 1921, the home in which Robert G. Ingersoll was born was dedicated as a perpetual monument.

His New York home in Gramercy Park was taken down and the Gramercy Park Hotel was erected on the site. On November 25, 1925, a commemorative bronze plate was affixed to the south wall of the hotel building. It reads;

On This Site
Was the Home of
Robert G. Ingersoll
"He Knew No Fear Except
The Fear of Doing Wrong"
Born 1833 Died 1899

Note: In the early 1960's this writer was employed by a company whose New York Office was on Park Avenue South, near 23rd Street, quite near the Gramercy Park Hotel. In fact, the firm had several permanent reservations in that hotel. I walked past it many times, was often in its lobby and even ate a few meals there, but I'm ashamed to admit I never noticed the bronze plate. But we all have learned a lot since then, haven't we?

Assessment of the Man

Even Robert's orthodox opponents conceded that he could out-talk them. But his irreverent wit brought retaliation.

Ingersoll denounced the 'mental malady known as Presbyterianism.' Christians called him a 'carrion-eating turkey buzzard more dangerous than small-pox and yellow fever.'

His friends insisted that he didn't advocate destruction of religion but only purification of it.

Robert G, Ingersoll, His Father And His Brothers

Assessment of the Man, continued

His literary output has been published in 2 collections:

The Works of Robert G. Ingersoll, in 13 volumes, collected by C.P. Farrell and published in 1912.

The Letters of Robert G. Ingersoll, collected by E.I. Wakefield and published in 1951.

Col. Bob Ingersoll, That Gay and Kindly Spokesman of the Devil

This cartoon and headline covered a review of Royal Bob, The Life of Robert G. Ingersoll by C.H. Cramer, published in 1952. His review was very favorable. I quote a few lines from it: "He was a model husband and father, and an open-handed philanthropist. He loved good food; he was gregarious in the extreme; he maintained cordial relations with such pillars of society as Andrew Carnegie. His scandalous views about religion were so clearly compatable with respectability that they lost much of their ominous character."

What Do I Think?

Robert made a lot of money, he spent a lot, he gave away a lot, he left very little.

Ingersoll summed up his own religion: "to do all useful things, to reach with thought and deed the ideal in your brain ... to look with trained and steady eyes for facts.. to increase knowledge, to take burdens from the weak ... to defend the right." Now that's a heavy load for any man.

He once wrote: "I have a creed, for this, the only world of which I know anything. Happiness is the only good. The way to be happy is to make others so. The place to be happy is here. The time to be happy is now."

Who can disagree with that? I would say 'Amen' but Robert might not appreciate that.

Sailboats, Street Signs, Life Boats and Paint

Chandler Lambert Ingersoll (221 W - Chart J - 7th Generation)

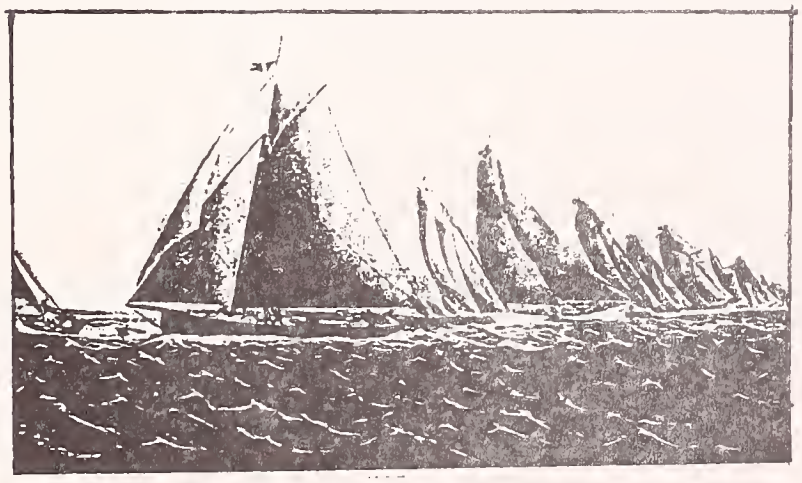
Chandler was born in 1808 in Turin, N.Y., the son of Daniel (82 W - 1773-1823) and Sarah (Berry) Ingersoll. He died June 1, 1884. Chandler married Louise Ann Tilyou (1811-1891) who was the daughter of Peter Vincent Tilyou by his first wife. Sometime after 1823, Peter Tilyou married, for his second wife, Chandler's mother, Sarah (Berry) Ingersoll as her second husband. Thus Chandler's wife was his step-sister, his step-father was his father-in-law, and I'm not quite sure what his mother was. Chandler and Louise had 7 children.

From an early age, Chandler lived at Ingersoll Place, Little River, Westfield, Mass. with his paternal bachelor uncle William Ingersoll and his paternal spinster aunt, Sally (Sarah) Ingersoll. He attended Westfield schools but while doing so he raised tobacco on his own account. At 14, he had accumulated a stake and he informed Uncle William that he was off to the big city to "learn a trade." His uncle tried to dissuade him, even telling him that one-half of the Ingersoll estate would be his if stayed until he was 21. Chandler was adamant about leaving, but he told William that he would sometime buy all of the Ingersoll estate. Obviously he had an itchy foot and a lot of confidence.

Chandler left in the dead of winter on the New Haven Canal Boat. It was frozen in and he was otherwise delayed and reached New York 13 days later, averaging a little more than six miles a day. Once in New York, he tried wood-carving, chair- and cabinet-making and finally small boat building. This last he loved and he was a builder of boats for the rest of his business life.

The lithograph above illustrates the fifth "Bowery Theatre." The original theatre, oldest in New York, had been destroyed by fire, as were the others.

While working as an apprentice boat-builder, he assembled one himself, working nights in his mother's and step-father's cellar. During this time he also found time to play small parts on the stage of the Bowery Theater, illustrated here. The fine print states that this was the fifth of this name, the earlier four having been burned to the ground. Do you suppose some critical members of the audiences were also arsonists? Really disgusted arsonists?



Chandler established his own boat-building shop in 1828 and for the next 30 years the business grew in leaps and bounds. This gained for him a reputation as one of the world's premier boat-builders. He actively promoted races for small sailing craft in the waters around New York, as good business strategy.

Sailboats, Street Signs, Life Boats and Paint

Chandler Lambert Ingersoll, continued

In 1857 Chandler turned the business over to his son Oliver. For a time he was engaged in politics and community affairs in New York and Brooklyn and he arranged to purchase the old Ingersoll estate in Massachusetts as he had told his Uncle William he would. He finally moved to Westfield where he developed beautiful flower gardens and a small animal and bird sanctuary. He died at age 77 and is buried in Greenwood Cemetery, Brooklyn.

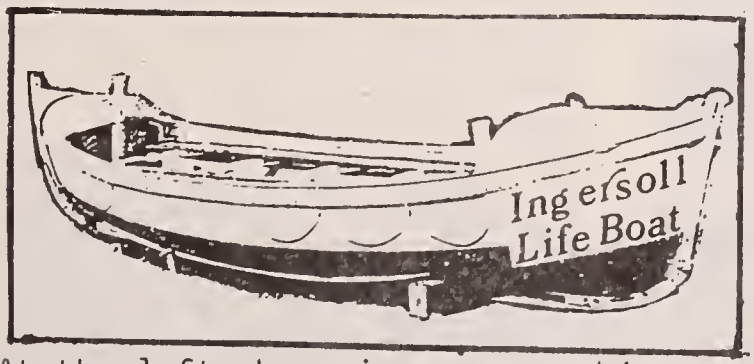
Oliver Roland Ingersoll (455 W - Chart J - 8th Generation

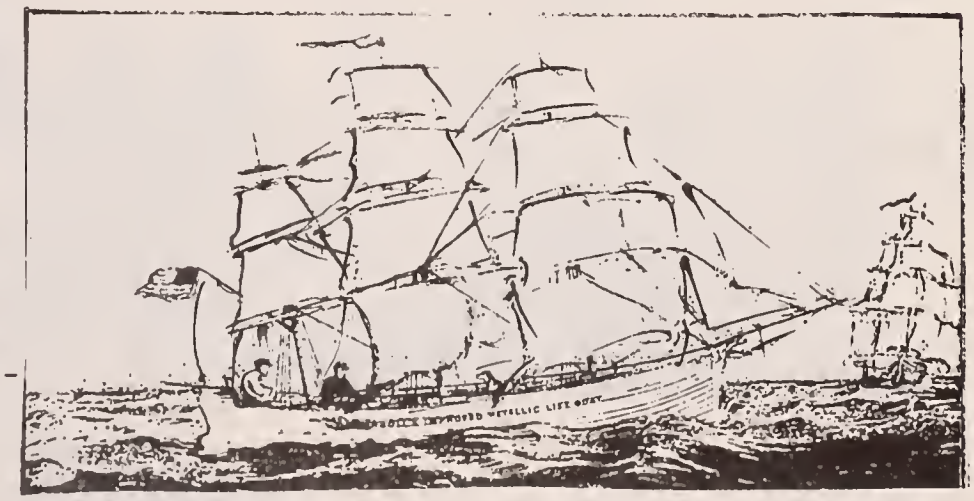
Oliver was born July 23, 1837 in New York City. He died January 8, 1914. Oliver married first, in 1859, Adaline N. Weekes and second, on April 3,1897, Agatha F. Yeaton. Adaline and Oliver had 8 children; Agatha had a daughter who lived only 3 days.

Oliver Roland was educated primarily in city schools, but graduated from Burr Seminary in Vermont. He served as an apprentice in his father's boat-building business, then tried selling life insurance for seven months. That short stint proved enough for him and it was back to boat-building. When barely of age, Oliver assumed control of the family business. Under his leadership it continued to grow and prosper.

He invented a metallic life-boat and a metallic life-raft, apparatus for detecting low water and high steam in boilers and a marine drag, all of which sold well. The marine drag, at one time, was used on all of the sea-going steam vessels of the world.

I had to resort to Webster's 3rd International Dictionary to find that a marine drag is: a device (as a wire, grapnel, net or scoop) for dragging underwater along the bottom or through the water below the surface to detect the presence of, dislodge, obtain or recover objects. Everyone should have several of these on hand for emergencies.

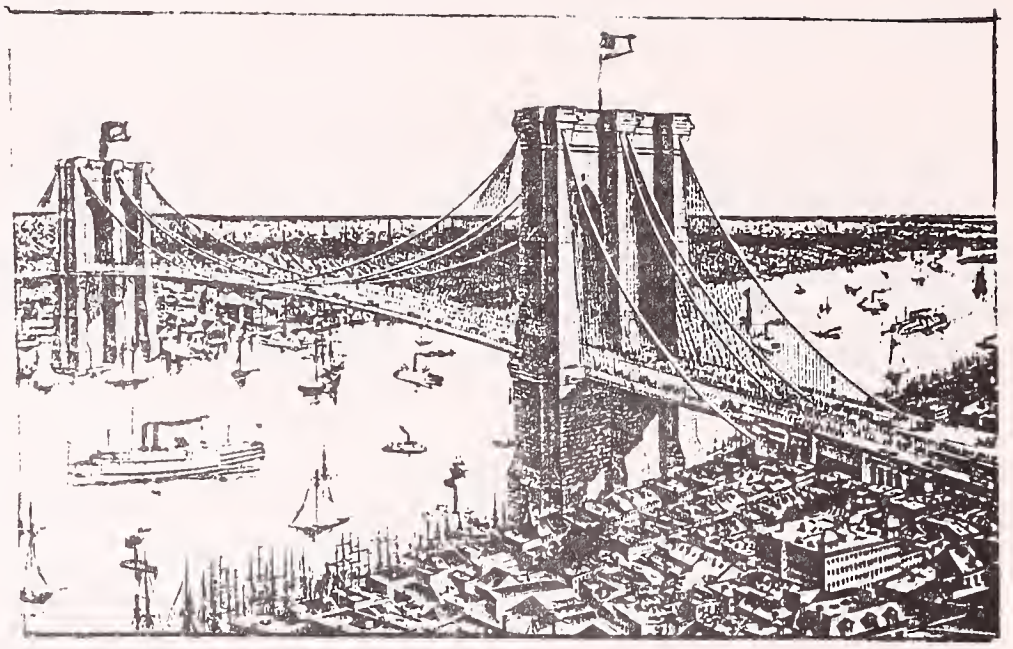




At the left above is a reasonably accurate reproduction of Oliver's metallic life boat. At the right is a picture of two men and a dog in an Ingersoll life-boat which they may or may not have sailed across the Atlantic. I'm not sure if this was a legitimate claim or if someone was pulling someone's leg. But all of that rigging must have been for some purpose. And the dog looks like a very good navigator.

Sailboats, Street Signs, Life Boats and Paint

Oliver Roland Ingersoll, continued



Oliver was the originator of the idea of building a bridge from Brooklyn to Manhattan. He advocated it for 4 years before anyone would listen to him. A Bill was introduced in Albany, but the Tweed Ring in New York and the Kinserly-Murphy bunch in Brooklyn stole the idea and influenced the Legislature away from Oliver's plan. He then offered to pay the city $150,000 and to build the bridge himself. As we all know, his offer was declined.

During his spare time, Oliver liked to keep busy and he invented, patented and manufactured:

White enamel letters for signs on streets, stores and buildings.

Many kinds of soap for home, industry, laundry.

Ingersoll Paint and Ingersoll Indestructable Paint.

All of these items were profitable. During the Civil War Oliver constructed all kinds of boats and pontoons for the Union forces, including the Ingersoll Self-Bailing and Righting Fire-proof Metallic Life Boats. He used all of his own shops and the boat-building yards of other companies.

For a time Oliver had an interest in the oil business in Oil Creek, Pa. as it was then being developed. It was a high-risk venture and he had some losses. However, he stuck with it long enough to recoup, run it profitably for a while and then sell out with overall gain.

At the left is a reproduction of a sketch of the Oil Creek operation in 1865.

Sailboats, Street Signs, Life Boats and Paint

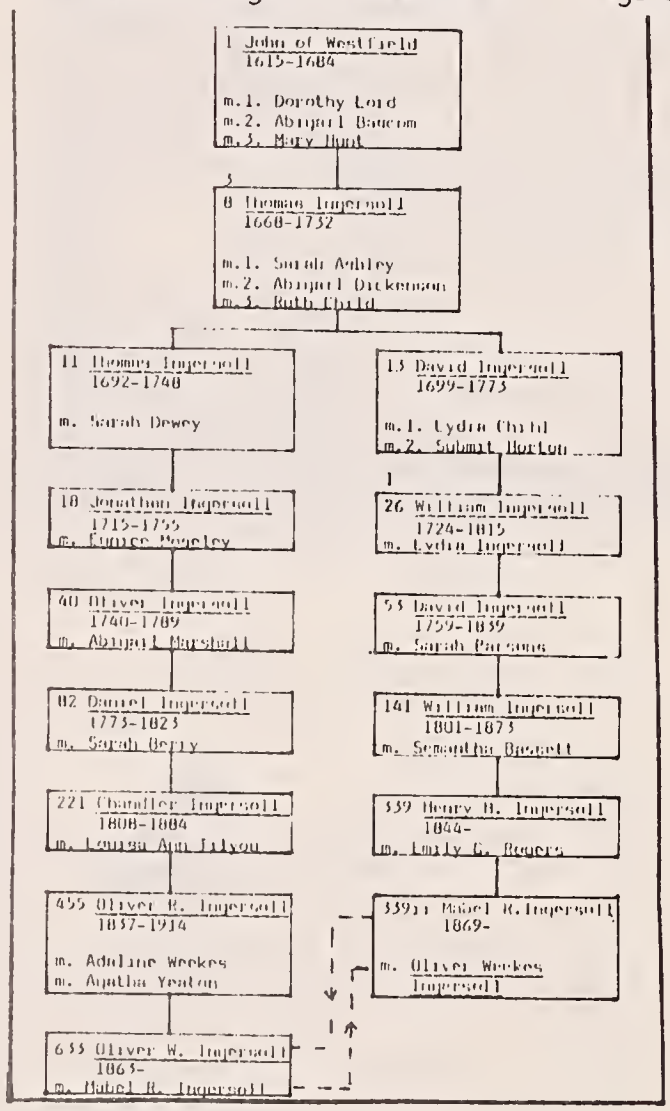
Oliver Weekes Ingersoll (633 W - No Chart - 9th Generation)

Oliver was born in 1863. He took over the family paint business and factory when his father retired and subsequently ran it very successfully.

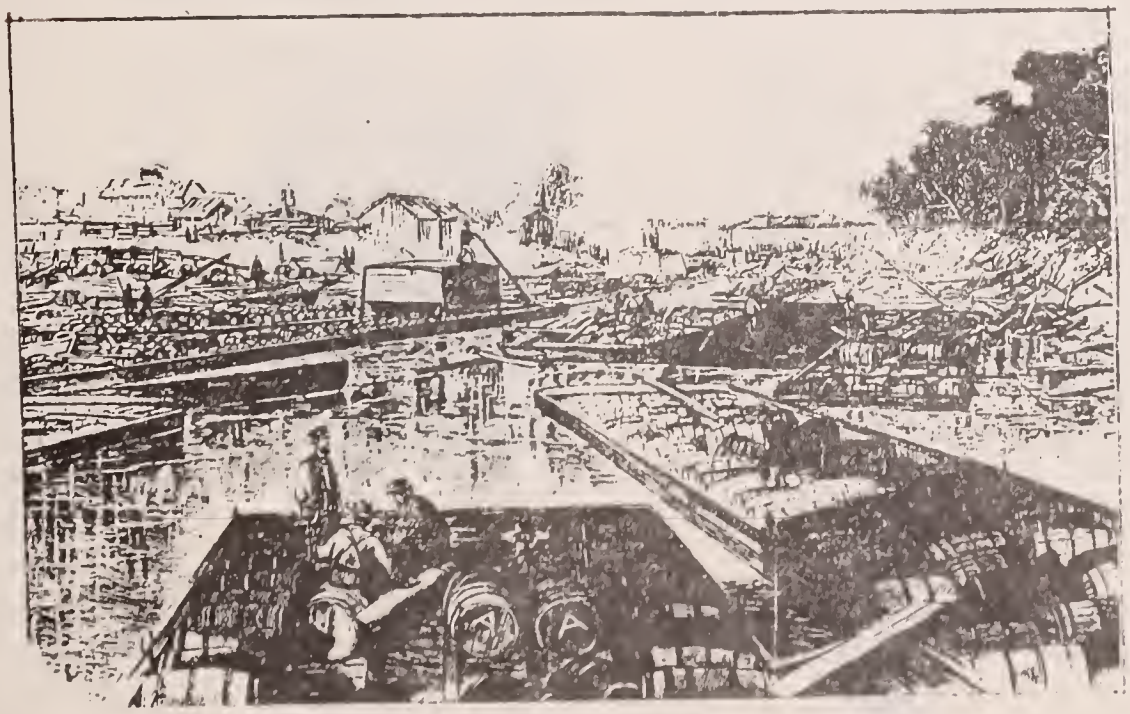
On November 3, 1892, he married Mabel Rogers Ingersoll, the daughter of Henry Hulbert Ingersoll (338 W - No Chart - 7th Generation) and Emily (Rogers) Ingersoll of Kentucky.

Oliver and Mabel were distant cousins as you can see from the generation chart at the left. They had four children.

Lines of Descent
Oliver Weekes Ingersoll and Mabel R. Ingersoll



Oliver Roland Ingersoll, reprised



Here is another picture of the Oil Creek, Pa. business venture of Oliver Roland.

Shipment was made in barrels. Most of these were loaded on barges and floated down the Allegheny River to Pittsburgh.

This is a reproduction of a contemporary sketch.

Time Marches On!

Dramtis Personae

Two Ingersolls were very much involved in making it possible for anyone with a dollar to note the time of day, to measure it, and to regret its swift, inexorable passage. These were two brothers, partners and friends, a combination not easily or frequently achieved.

Robert Hawley Ingersoll (318viii W - Chart I - 8th Generation)

Robert was born December 26, 1859 in Delta, Michigan, the eighth child of Orville Boudenot and Mary Elizabeth (Beers) Ingersoll. Orville was the manager of a large farm. Robert's regular schooling ceased when he was ten; school attendance for one term of each of the three succeeding years completed his formal education. Thenceforward he worked with his father on the farm.

When Robert was twenty he was hired by some relatives to transport some cattle to Connecticut and to work on a farm there. That got him out of Michigan but a few months of Connecticut farming convinced him that wasn't for him, wherever it was. His brother, Howard Smith Ingersoll, 15 years older, who was working in New York City, suggested that Robert might do better there. He thought it was worth a shot and arrived in the big city, clutching his very meager savings.

That capital was invested in a hole-in-the-wall business where he manufactured and sold rubber stamps. Robert worked like a dog, putting in as many hours as he needed to. As a result the venture prospered and the work load became so heavy he asked his younger brother Charles Henry to come from Michigan to help. Charles was eager to come and together they continued to make rubber stamps, but they also developed a toy type-writer (in 1882?), a patent key-ring, and a series of other novelties they thought might sell well. And they all did. This led to the purchase of products from other manufacturers for re-sale. Robert directed sales and promotion while Charles managed the factory. The business grew from a jobbing and wholesale enterprise to a mail-order operation and finally to a chain-store system.

The brothers had foresight enough to see beyond gimmickry and when they could they extended their lines to include staple articles in steady demand. At one time they even sold bicycles and bicycle parts. Under the masthead of Robt. H. Ingersoll & Bro. they purchased a thousand inexpensive watches from Waterbury Clock Company and introduced them to customers in 1892, to retail for $1 each. The previous low price for a cheap watch was $3.50, so these went fast, so fast that Robert and Charlie entered into a contract with Waterbury Clock Company for them to manufacture watches to Ingersoll specifications, to be marketed as "Universal" watches. In selling these, Robert employed common terms, common prices and the well known guarantee. To combat competition the name was switched to "Ingersoll" and the slogan "the watch that made the dollar famous" was displayed with great success at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893.

It was said of Robert that he was the man "who took watches out of gentlemen's pockets and put them in everyone's overall pockets."

Time Marches On!

Robert Hawley Ingersoll, continued

Sales were so good that eventually Robt. H. Ingersoll & Bro. purchased and operated several factories. By 1919, 70,000,000 watches had been sold with the maker's pledge to fix any watch for not more than 50 cents. With America's entry into World War I, the brothers lost many of their skilled workers to the armed forces and to defense industries. Replacements just couldn't maintain quality of workmanship. As a result, adherence to their repair pledge forced them into bankruptcy in 1922. The company's assets were sold to the Waterbury Clock Company.

In 1924 Robert introduced the Ingersoll Dollar Razor Strop which was successful as a product but did not produce real financial profits.

Robert married Roberta (Edith?) Maria Bannister on June 22, 1904, when he was forty-five. She committed suicide on December 19, 1926. Robert died in Denver, Colorado on September 4, 1928.

A Few Recollections

Robert was a member of the Plymouth Church in Brooklyn. He had a fine voice and sang in the choir there while Henry Ward Beecher was the pastor.

The company which manufactured most of the watches the Ingersolls sold, early on, was the Waterbury Clock Company which has survived in various forms as a part of the company making and selling Timex watches.

(Try to follow this: the Waterbury Watch Company did not produce watches for the Ingersolls. However, Waterbury Watch Company was reorganized into the New England Watch Company, which the Ingersolls purchased in 1914.)

After the failure of Robt. H. Ingersoll & Bro. the firm was taken over by the Waterbury Clock Company which operated under the name of Ingersoll-Waterbury Company. This company introduced the Mickey Mouse watch for kids. It was very popular with the youngsters but was never financially successful. The original Mickeys are now collectors' items, commanding substantial prices.

In 1944 the Ingersoll-Waterbury Company was purchased by United States Time corporation. The Ingersoll trademark was discontinued in 1951, the Timex trademark replacing it.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Time Marches On!

Charles Henry Ingersoll (563 W - No Chart - 8th Generation)

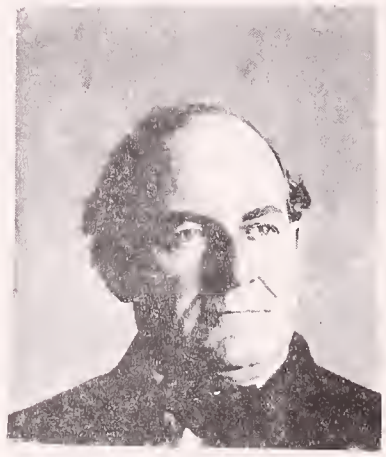
Charles Henry was born October 29, 1865 in Delta, Michigan, the youngest of nine children of Orville Boudenot and Mary Elizabeth (Beers) Ingersoll. His formal education was limited, as was that of his brother, Robert Hawley.

He became a full partner as Bro. in Robt. H. Ingersoll & Bro. and shared all of the problems and triumphs described in the foregoing sketch of his brother.

He married Eleanor Bond of Brooklyn on July 5, 1898 and moved immediately from Brooklyn to New Jersey. He lived five years in East Orange, 17 in South Orange and moved to Montclair in 1924. Charles and Eleanor had 4 children, all born in East Orange. He died September 21, 1948.

In addition to his work with his brother, Charles was extremely active in community and political affairs in New Jersey. He became a friend of Woodrow Wilson when Wilson was President of Princeton University. He arranged the first meeting of Wilson and William Jennings Bryan who later nominated Wilson as a candidate for President of the United States. The first Wilson League For President was organized by Charles at his home in South Orange.

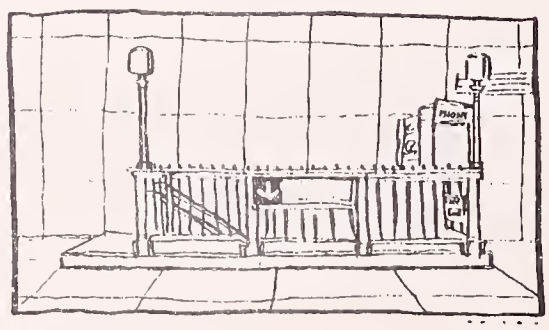
Mr. Ingersoll's last business address was 315 Fourth Ave., New York City. In the 1930's Remington Rand Inc. purchased the 18 story building at that address and it became the company's Executive Office.



The writer of all this wonderful information was an employee of Remington Rand at its Administrative Offices in Buffalo. I had occasion to visit the New York office from time to time. Over the years the name of the street became Park Avenue South, and the company I worked for became Sperry Rand Corporation. The Buffalo offices were merged with the New York Offices in 1960, and I was located at that address for three years. In 1963 we moved to Sperry Rand Building at 1290 Avenue of The Americas. The former Remington Rand building, where Charlie and I both worked, was sold,to whom I know not.

While I worked in New York at 315, I lived in Chatham, New Jersey. I must have followed the route in 1960-1963 that Charles did in his commute long before to East Orange, South Orange and Montclair. This involved (going home), hoofing it to the Hudson Tube Entrance at 6th Avenue and 23rd Street, taking the tube (now Port Authority Trans Hudson - PATH) to Hoboken and then riding the Lackawanna RR to East Orange, South Orange or Chatham on one line or to Montclair on another. Lackawanna became Lackawanna-Erie and eventually Amtrak.

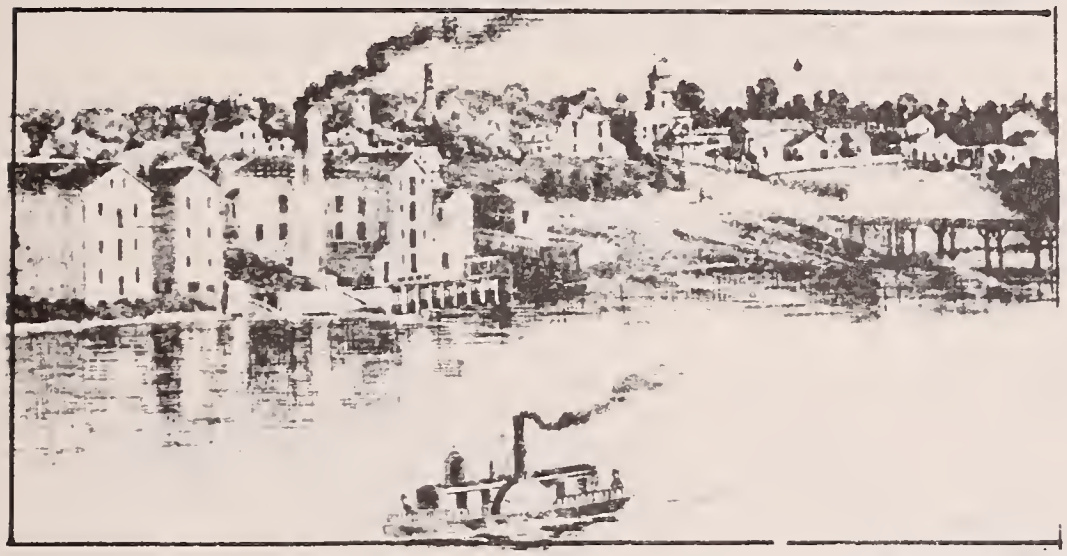
The entrance to or exit from the Hudson Tubes looked very much like this picture. When I rode all of these facilities they were hot, jammed, dirty, odorous and slow. They are much nicer and fresher and faster now and cost much more.



Prairie Schooners, Ships-of-War and Fighting Sailors

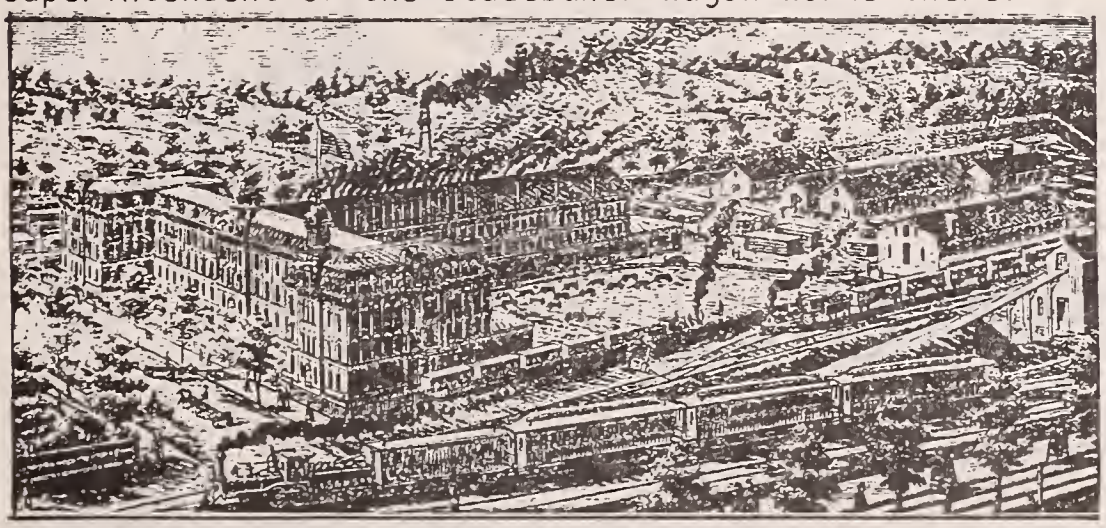
Wagon Wheels, Wagon Wheels

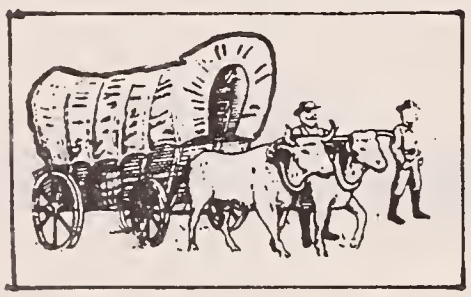
Harmon Wadsworth Ingersoll (381 W - Chart J - 7th Generation) was born in Ohio in 1818 and died in South Bend, Indiana in 1892. In January, 1847 he married Rebecca A. Deniston (1828-1903) in Niles, Michigan. Harmon and Rebecca settled in Niles; their three children were born there, Royal Rodney, Alfred Munroe and Harmon Wadsworth, Jr.



This view of Niles and the St. Joseph River was drawn while the Ingersolls lived there. The writer visited Niles many times about 85 years later. It was a small but bustling city, a stop on the line of the Michigan Central Railroad, now known as AMTRAK or some such outlandish name.

In 1865 the Ingersolls moved to South Bend, about 12 miles distant. Harmon became Superintendent of the Studebaker Wagon Works there.





This is a picture of the Studebaker Wagon Works, drawn before 1875, with a sample of its products in action. This is how the plant looked when Harmon was the boss. H. and C. Studebaker founded the company in 1852 and soon built a reputation for quality. They made many wagons for the United States Government during the Civil War. This plant was one of the primary sources of the wagons with which the pioneers crossed the Great Plains.

Later automobiles were made on this site, as were defense materials during World Wars I and II. Your scribe observed these buildings in 1943. It looked then as if some of the original structures were still in use. In the late 1940's Studebaker introduced radically stream-lined, reasonably priced cars, which the public did not readily accept. After struggling for several years, Studebaker went out of the automobile business. Ironically, the industry was shortly producing cars whose lines could be traced to the unsuccessful Studebakers.

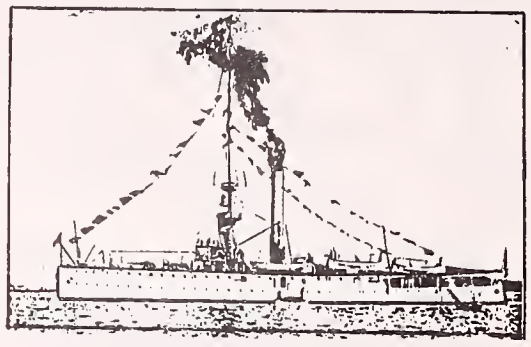
In succeeding sections I will outline only the careers of Royal Rodney Ingersoll, his son and grandson. Royal's brothers Alfred and Harmon were estimable men, I'm sure, but, alas, they were not nautical.

Prairie Schooners, Ships-of-War and Fighting Sailors

A-sailing He Would Go

Royal Rodney Ingersoll (614 W - Chart J - 8th Generation) was born in Niles, Michigan on December 4, 1847. He was appointed to the United States Naval Academy in 1864 and graduated in 1868. For five subsequent years he was assigned to the European Squadron, but he managed to get home to marry Cynthia Eason in LaPorte, Indiana on August 23, 1873. In 1875-76 he served on China Station.

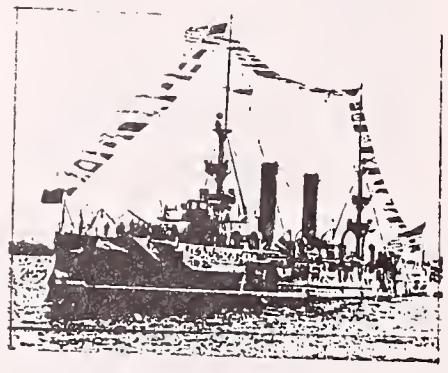
For the next 25 years Royal alternated between sea duty and periods of instructing at the Naval Academy in Ordnance, Ballistics and Gunnery. During the period 1890-1901 he was Head of the Ordnance Department at Annapolis, his tenure interrupted by his required time at sea. He wrote or collaborated in writing three highly technical books on his specialties.



USS Helena

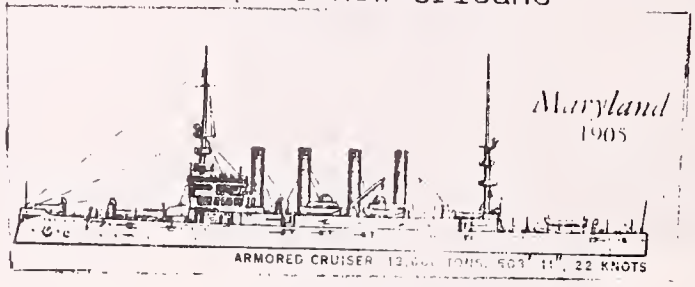
In 1893 Royal was made Lieutenant Commander and was the Executive Officer of the USS Philadelphia , flagship of the Asiastic Squadron for four years.

During the Spanish-American War Royal commanded USS Supply, a refrigerator ship converted from the trans-ocean steamer Illinois, attached to Admiral Sampson's squadron blockading Havana and Santiago. Again on China Station in 1899-1902, he commanded the gunboat USS Helena operating in the Yangtze River. Later, as a Captain, he commanded the cruiser USS New Orleans, showship of the Navy, a plum.



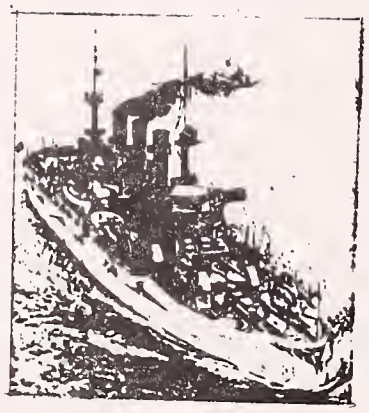
USS New Orleans

The brand new USS Maryland, a heavy cruiser, was commissioned April 18, 1905, with Captain Ingersoll in command.



USS Maryland

When Admiral Robley D. Evans was planning the round-the-world cruise of the Great White Fleet, he selected Royal as his Fleet Chief-of-Staff on USS Connecticut. Evans became ill on the first leg from Hampton Roads to San Francisco, and he and his Chief-of-Staff left the fleet at that time.



USS Connecticut

Back in Washington, Royal was made Rear Admiral on July 11, 1908. He served on the General Board of the Navy until his retirement on December 4, 1909. During World War I, he was recalled to active duty and served as President of a Special Navy Ordnance Board, 1917-1919.

Royal Rodney was slightly below medium height, very erect of carriage. After his retirement he became very active in community affairs in LaPorte. He and Cynthia had one son, Royal Eason Ingersoll. Royal Rodney died April 21, 1931 in LaPorte.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Prairie Schooners, Ships-of-War and Fighting Sailors

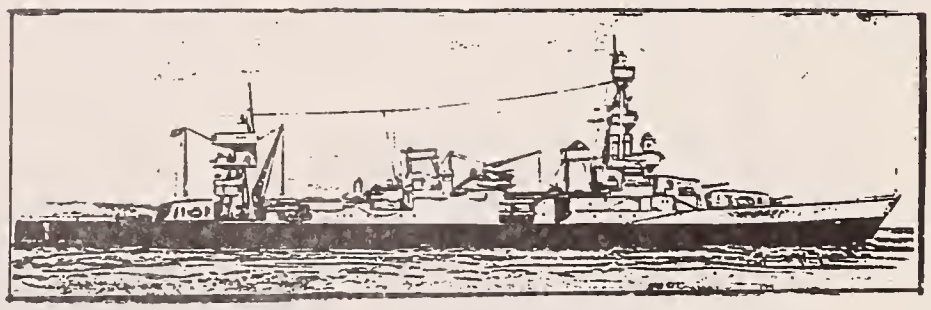
Down To The Sea In Ships

Royal Eason Ingersoll (614i W - No Chart - 9th Generation) was born in Washington, D.C. on June 20, 1883. He entered the United States Naval Academy in 1901 and graduated fourth in the 1905 class, three places ahead of Chester W. Nimitz.

Royal Eason served as a very junior officer on the USS Connecticut, the flagship of the Great White Fleet making its muscle-showing world cruise at the behest of President Theodore Roosevelt in 1907-1908. On the initial Hampton Roads - San Francisco leg of that cruise, Royal Rodney Ingersoll was serving as Fleet Chief-of-Staff to Admiral Robley Evans, who ran the whole shebang. It is unlikely that they had the opportunity to do more than be polite to each other.

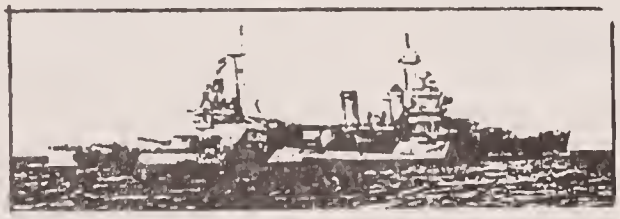
On January 29, 1910, temporarily home from his travels, Royal Eason married Louise Van Harlingen. Like his father, his sea duty alternated with shore assignments. During World War I he organized the Office of Naval Communications, a Navy fixture ever since. He served in the Office of Naval Intelligence and as an instructor at the Naval Academy. In 1924-26 he commanded the USS Nokomis and subsequently was Chief of Staff to Admiral Pratt of the Atlantic Fleet, 1927-1930. During a tour in Naval Intelligence, he helped break the Japanese naval communications code in 1931.

As a captain he commanded the cruiser USS Augusta in 1933, and the cruiser USS San Francisco in 1934-35. During the 1938-1940 interval he was in command of Cruiser Division 6 of the Atlantic Fleet.



USS Augusta

Now a Rear Admiral, he was Assistant Chief of Naval Operations in 1940 and was given the command of the Atlantic Fleet in 1942. His responsibilities on this job included protecting convoys carrying materiél to Europe and of developing anti-submarine measures. During this period his flagship was the comparatively speedy USS Vixen, a 3600 ton converted yacht, enabling him to move from port to port as required.



USS San Francisco

In 1944, when the 10th Fleet (Atlantic) came into being, Royal Eason was transferred, as Vice Admiral of the Western Sea Frontier, in control of all logistic for the Pacific Fleet operations.

Royal Eason and Louise had two children, Royal Rodney II and Alice Jean. He died in Bethesda, Md. on May 20, 1976, age 92.

Samuel Eliot Morison, the eminent naval historian had this to say about Royal Eason, "The public knew nothing of him. Even to most of the Atlantic Fleet he remained a shadowy, almost legendary figure."

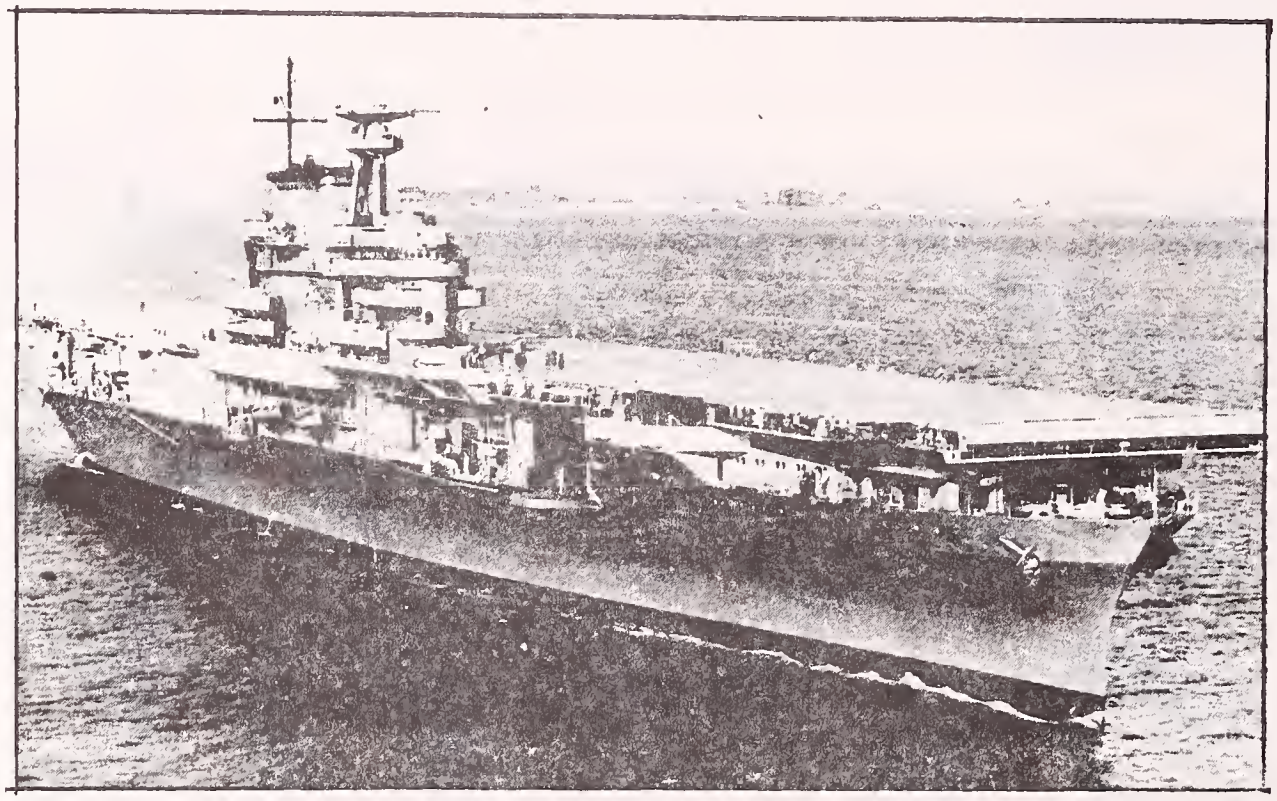
Down To The Sea In Ships, continued

Another historian, Ladislas Farrago, says, "... a sad faced, quiet, and somewhat rumpled man, he was indeed a wise and learned man, a percipient naval officer, a great teacher, and an outstanding staff officer. He was by nature and disposition the staff officer par excellence..... Ingersoll performed a herculean job in building the Atlantic Fleet into a gigantic force, in maintaining it in top form under the stress and strain, and utilizing it with dispatch and efficiency. But the subtle intricacies of anti-submarine warfare somehow eluded him. He lacked the extra finesse which the activity demanded."

So say he!

Many Brave Hearts

Royal Rodney Ingersoll II, son of Royal Eason Ingersoll and grandson of Royal Rodney Ingersoll, was a Naval Academy graduate on shore assignment at the time of Pearl Harbor. Years later, an associate of the young man's father wrote that Royal Eason told his son that no regular officer should be satisfied with shore duty, now that war had been declared. As a result, perhaps with a little fatherly pressure on the Office of Personnel, Lieutenant Ingersoll was posted to USS Hornet, the aircraft carrier.

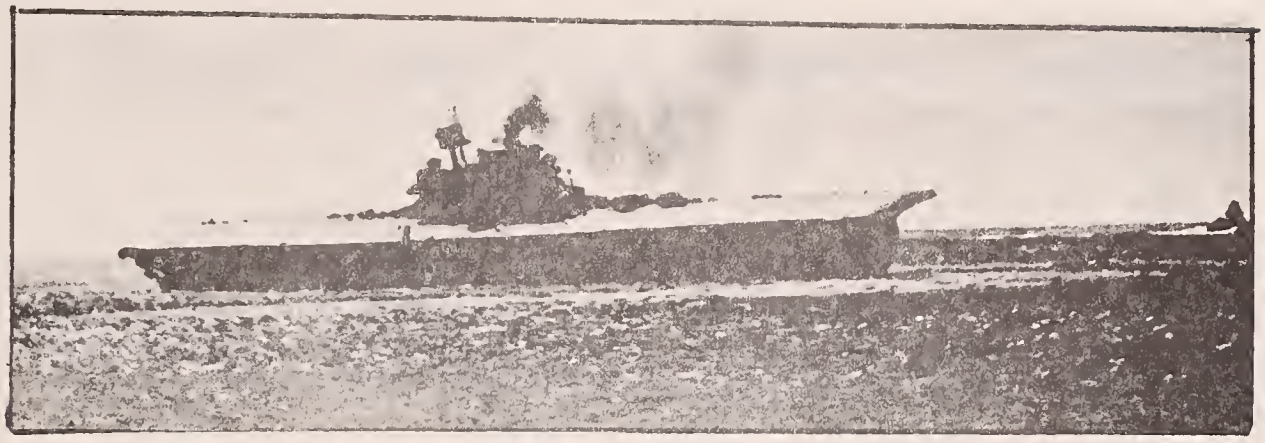


USS Hornet CV-8

During the Battle of Midway on June 4, 1942, Hornet had lost all of her torpedo bombers, her dive bombers had missed action entirely and her fighters had mostly ditched for lack of fuel. Flyers from USS Yorktown, hit by torpedoes and badly damaged, were being taken aboard Hornet.

Prairie Schooners, Ships-of-War and Fighting Sailors

Many Brave Hearts, continued



The end draws near for USS *Yorktown*.

A wounded pilot crash-landed his Wildcat fighter without cutting off his machine guns. As the plane struck the impact triggered its guns, spraying slugs toward the command island. They penetrated one-inch hardened plate and a steel I-beam. The wild shots killed 5 men and wounded 20. Among the dead was the promising young officer, Royal Rodney Ingersoll II.

The USS Hornet survived the Battle of Midway and later was the "Shangri-La" carrier from which Jimmy Doolittle launched his B-25 bombing raid on Tokyo. This demonstrated to the Japanese that they were not invulnerable, that their Imperial Fleet could not protect them forever.

The same associate of Royal Rodney II's father tells us that Royal Eason took the news of his son's death stoically in public, and that later he admitted, privately that he was all torn up inside, thinking it was his advice that led to his son's death.

Are asleep in the deep.

Admiral Chester W. Nimitz

Prairie Schooners, Ships-of-War and Fighting Sailors

The Mysterious Admiral

Mrs. Avery's fine book about the Ingersolls does not pursue the genealogy of some Ingersoll branches beyond the latter part of the 19th century. I'm sure this was simply because the information was not then available to her and she had to call it quits sometime. Therefore, much happened in the family that she did not know and could not ascertain. Obviously she does not report anything later than 1925, the date her book was published.

I found out, as did others, from Dictionaries of Biography and encyclopediae that there was another Ingersoll admiral, but we are unable to trace his ancestry. All of the information we have about him is set forth below.

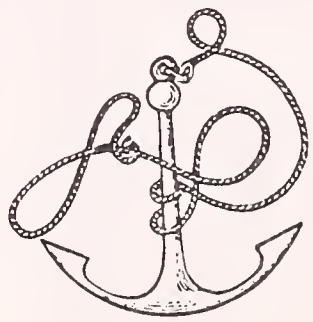
Stuart Howe Ingersoll was born June 3, 1898 in Springfield, Mass., the son of Arthur and Bernice (Howe) Ingersoll. He graduated from the United States Naval Academy and received a Doctor of Laws degree from the University of Rhode Island.

In 1931 he married Josephine Sprigman. Stuart served through the naval ranks and was commissioned a Vice-Admiral in 1955. He commanded the U.S. Seventh Fleet and the Taiwan Defense Command 1955-57. During the 1957-60 period he was President of the U.S. Naval War College. Later in 1960 he was recalled to active duty for a short time in The Office of the Secretary of Defense.

Stuart Howe and Josephine had three children:

Mary Josephine (Mrs. Verne H. Jennings, Jr.)
Sally Anne Ingersoll
Stuart Howe Ingersoll, Jr.

He died January 29, 1983, in Newport, Rhode Island.



The Essential Wiswell Trivia

A Pot-pourri of Miscellany

Hodgepodge

There are "quirky" people in every family. The Ingersolls were not exceptions. They had some strange aunts, uncles, cousins and in-laws. A few of them are described briefly here.

In American genealogy, people who trace their ancestry to a passenger or passengers of the Mayflower on her 1620 voyage to America, are set apart or set themselves apart from the rest of us. This is no great shakes. The Pilgrims were good, ordinary folks who had the courage to risk what they had to gain what they wanted. Lots of others did that when they came to America, but the Mayflower people were the first ones to make it work. Several Ingersolls married into families who had Mayflower connections. That relationship has been noted in these papers in those instances. Here are two Ingersolls, one male, one female, who married Mayflower descendants but have not been mentioned specifically elsewhere. The others listed here are "odd" characters, but interesting.

Worthington Hooker Ingersoll (257 W - No Chart - 7th Generation)

Worthington was born October 11, 1852 at Springfield, Mass. On September 26, 1883, at Scranton, Pa., he married Harriet Baker, born January 15, 1857.

Harriet's mother, Mary Ann Latham, was a descendant of John Winslow (brother of Governor Edward Winslow), Mary Chilton, who was the first woman to land on Plymouth Rock, and of William Latham.

Harriet Jencks Ingersoll (238 W - No Chart - 7th Generation)

Harriet was born October 1, 1835 in Springfield, Mass., a cousin of Worthington Hooker Ingersoll (257 W) noted above. She married, on August 13, 1856, Charles Phelps Huntington Ripley, who was descended directly from William Bradford, who arrived on the Mayflower. They had five children, including Charles Stedman Ripley, who compiled The Ingersolls of Hampshire.

Ebenezer Ingersoll (13 H - No Chart - 3rd Generation)

Ebenezer lived from 1711 to 1773, a large part of that time in New Jersey. His will read, in part:

> If negro wench helps to bring up testator's children for ten years, she shall be free; if she proves cross and stubborn, she shall be sold for the time.

I do not know what is meant by "for the time", nor do I know how many children there were, nor their ages, nor what happened to the designated involuntary nursemaid.

Platt Carl Ingersoll (431 H - No Chart - 7th Generation)

Platt Carl was born in Stamford, Conn. in 1815 and died March 25, 1878 in Brooklyn. I don't know much about Platt except that he married twice and had three children by his first wife, one by his second. He was either very well thought of in Brooklyn or his neighborhood hated him, since the local newspaper, the Greenpoint Star published a special edition when he died, either celebrating or commemorating the event.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

A Pot-pourri of Miscellany

David Ingersoll (53 W - Chart J - 5th Generation)

David was born December 1, 1750 in Great Barrington, Mass. On December 3, 1781 he married Sarah Parsons, whose grandmother Sarah Pierrepont Edwards traced her ancestry to Cedric and Charlemange.

David lived in Lee on a farm from which he obtained many fine pieces of marble, used for hearth and step stones in many homes in the community.

His granddaughter, Harriet Ingersoll of Ohio, tells this tale about him: "My grandfather, David Ingersoll of Lee, had a large orchard, made nice cider which was pressed into large white marble troughs made from stone on his farm. I remember riding on the mill beam. He found so many were getting drunk from his cider, he cut down all the trees except those needed for his family."

T think the apples were pressed, rather than the cider, Harriet to the contrary. It sounds as if David may have wished to reserve to his family the means of intoxication, but he seems like a non-imbiber to me.

David was a Deacon of his church and served in the militia in the Revolution. Described as of medium height, fair complexion, blue eyes and brown hair, he had 13 children, including two sets of twins. Three of his sons became clergymen. David died January 26, 1839.

Cyrus Stone Ingersoll (197 H - No Chart - 6th Generation)

Cyrus was born December 18, 1814. On October 1, 1840 he married Calista Gay. Cyrus was susceptible to "gold fever" and "itchy foot", either or both. He left home in 1849 to try his luck panning for gold in California. At that time he had three small children, but we have no word as to his plans for supporting them and Calista during his absence. After a few years, he returned, sans gold. Evidently he was welcomed.

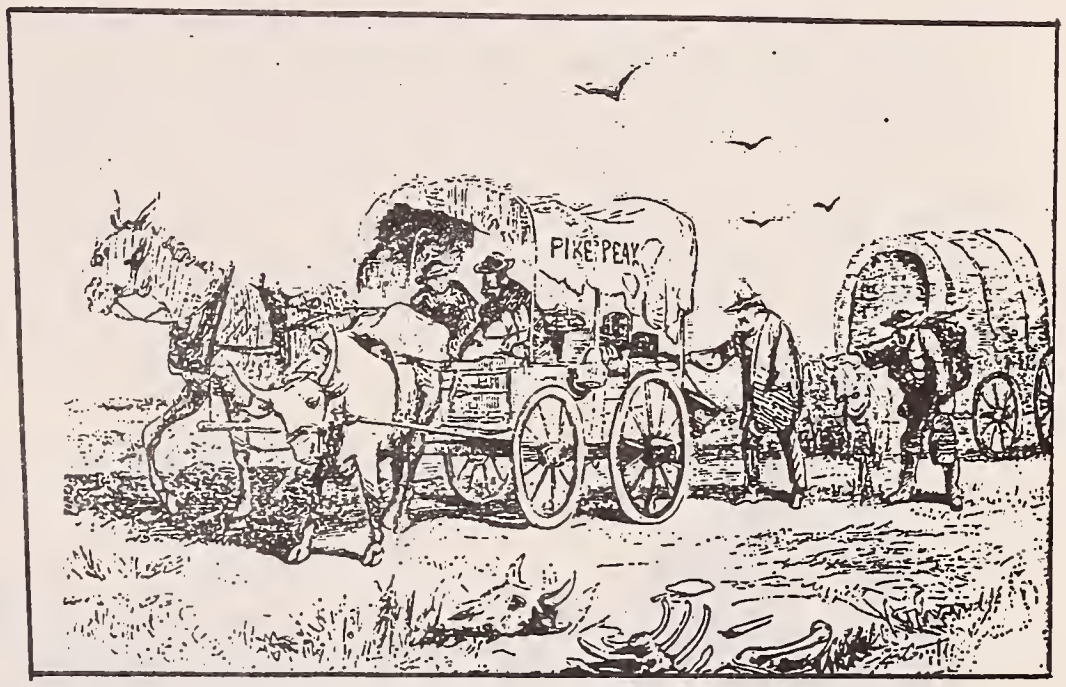
Cyrus is not one of the miners pictured at the left, but the illustration should provide an idea of the executive attire and working conditions of the time and place.

Many men were tempted by the prospect of becoming overnight millionaires; most of them were disappointed, as was Cyrus. Stories of the big strikes were probably true but someone else always got there first and skimmed the cream.

A Pot-pourri of Miscellany

Cyrus Stone Ingersoll, continued

When there was news of another strike in Colorado in 1859, Cyrus again fell ill of his old malady and away he went - scoot. He joined a "Pike's Peak or Bust" wagon train. He got to Colorado without "busting" but he might better have stayed home, for all the good it did him.



And then, still in Colorado, he saw a beam of hope. It was in Montana that he would make his fortune. That's where his gold was. But of course, this was another will-o'-the-wisp for Cy. He determined to settle down in Helena and to forego rainbow chasing.

Here is a picture of Main Street in Helena in 1870. What a garden spot. If you use a magnifying glass, you can read Tobaccos-Cigars and Union Brewery signs of the left and Belmont Saloon on the right. A few doors away, on the same side, there is a suspended boot, evidently advertising high footwear, which one probably needed. All of the pedestrians are male, most of them clustered in front of Union Brewery waiting for it to open.

The account I read said that Cyrus remained stationary and that he opened a successful medical practice there. Qualifications? Maybe only a glib tongue.

Calista died in 1874. I know not where, nor do I know when Cyrus died.

Josiah Ingersoll (9 H - Chart J - 3rd Generation)

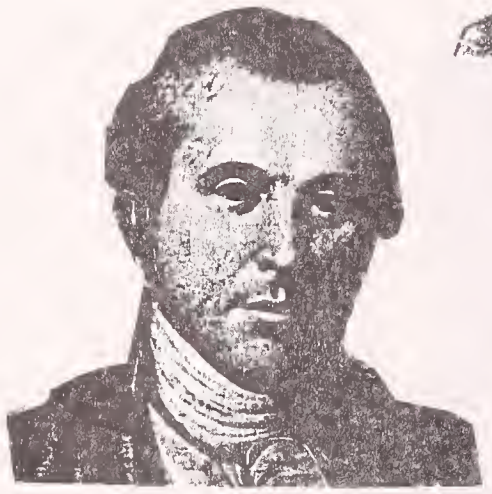
Josiah was born about 1718 at Greenwich, Conn. He served in the Revolution at age 60 in Lt. Colonel Benedict's Westchester County Militia Associated Fencible. He had some business contacts with Livingston Manor and Van Cortland Manor and was mentioned in the will of Robert Livingston, grandson of Bad Robert Livingston. Josiah joined a church for the first time at age 70, evidently thinking it was time to get his ducks in a row. He had six children by his first wife, ten by his second and was 57 when his last child, Martha, was born in 1775. She was 33 years younger than oldest brother Gideon.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Names Will Never Hurt

Where Did They Live?

When a Post Office was first proposed for the area now comprising the Town of Nichols, the place was named Rushville. This was suggested by an influential early settler, Dr. Galamiel H. Barstow, intended to honor Dr. Benjamin Rush of Philadelphia. A little later it was found that there was already a Rushville, N.Y. in Yates County. At the suggestion of the United States Post Office, the local people chose the replacement name Nichols to recognize the original patentee of the area, Colonel Nichols.



Here are several pictures of Dr. Rush, painted by different artists, at different angles and at different ages.

Benjamin was born in 1745. Early on he enjoyed a fine reputation as a physician, but later some of his treatments and regimens were labeled as "spectacularly wrong-headed" and it was said they "tragically influenced medicine for several decades."

Dr. Rush was a signer of the Declaration of Independence and a membe· of the Continental Congress. From 1797 to 1813 he served as Treasurer of the U.S. Mint. He was a Professor of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania from 1792 until his death.

While some of his medical precepts were later rejected, Dr. Rush was an advocate of better education for girls, abolition, temperance, civil rights and prison reform. He was instrumental in obtaining more humane treatment for the mentally ill. In 1786, he established, in Philadelphia the first free medical dispensary in the country. He died in 1813. Dr. Rush was a contemporary and acquaintance of his fellow-townsman, Jared Ingersoll the Younger.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

The Ingersoll House In Nichols

In The Beginning

Miles Forman, a Revolutionary soldier and pensioner, came to the Nichols area about 1795 or 1796, encouraged or invited by his father-in-law Jonathan Platt. In 1811 Miles built a house on the present River Road about a mile east of the village, perhaps an eighth of a mile from the Susquehanna. This house remained in the Forman family until the death of Stephen Forman, Miles' grandson, in 1884.

George Ingersoll (1847-1909), then of Owego, bought the house and farm from the Forman heirs about 1892 and moved to it with his growing family. It remained in the Ingersoll family until the death of Frederick Clinton Ingersoll, George's son, in 1943.

This is a picture of the "Ingersoll" house as it appeared in 1909 at the age of 98. Note the giant maples. In the 1930's about a score of these stood before and around the house, some still showing the scars of maple-sugaring.

And Continuing

The picture at the right was taken in the spring of 1992. The old house is 181 years old and aging well. Many of the big old maples have disappeared and given way to faster-growing foliage. But a few old trees still stand guard, shading the semi-circular drive. In the mid-1930's a couple of these trees carried vestiges of long abandoned tree-houses, built by Latham and Fox nephews of Fred Ingersoll.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Stories of Old Houses

George Arthur Ingersoll (501 W - No Chart - 8th Generation)

George was born April 12, 1847 at Owego, N.Y. On October 12, 1870, he married Huldah Cornell, who was born October 14, 1843. She was the daughter of William E. Cornell and Sarah (Perry) Cornell, of Schoharie County, N.Y.

GEORGE ARTHUR INGERSOLL

For a time after their marriage, George and Huldah lived in Glen Mary, an historical land mark in Owego. More about this a few paragraphs later.

About 1890, George and Huldah purchased the Forman house in Nichols, built in 1811 by Miles Forman, son-in-law of Jonathan Platt, one of the earliest settlers. Ever since this has been known as the Ingersoll house. It is on the River Road, a mile east of the village, sitting at road level with a slope at the rear, down to flat bottom land stretching to the Susquehannah.

George died September 19, 1909. Huldah continued to live there until her death October 20, 1925. Their son Frederick occupied the house until his death on April 16, 1943. Shortly afterward the place was sold by his grandchildren.

There is a picture of the Ingersoll house on page 71 of FGA. The picture reproduced here was taken in 1992 and demonstrates the place's graceful and gracious lines, still handsome at age 181.

Other Ingersoll Houses

The original Ingersoll Place was the one erected by John Ingersoll of Westfield in 1666, which was reconstructed and enlarged in 1700. It was the home place for many generations of the family.

The Governor Ingersoll House in New Haven, at the corner of Temple and Elm Streets on the Central Square was occupied by and owned by Governor Charles Roberts Ingersoll. It is now owned by Yale University.

The Ingersoll or Block House on Farens Road in Stamford was the home of Simon Ingersoll, the inventor of the friction clutch, a spring scale and a steam wagon. Parts of it date from 1721 and alterations since 1821.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Stories of Old Houses

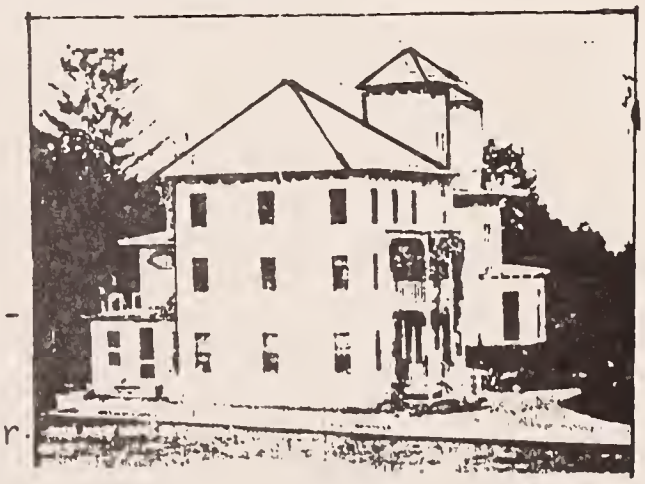
Nathaniel Willis and Glen Mary

Nathaniel Parker Willis was born in Portland, Maine on January 20, 1806, the son of Nathaniel Willis who founded the Boston Recorder in 1816, the world's first religious newspaper. Young Nathaniel graduated from Yale in 1827. Before and during his college years he wrote poems, mostly of a religious nature. He published these in 1828 and the book was well received, and was hailed by critics. Thenceforward, his literary career was continuously successful. He wrote poems, stories, essays, comment, songs and hymns. Some of his work was of a social nature, some of a religious type. His work was especially liked in Europe.

In 1835, while in England, he met and married Mary Leighton Stace, daughter of General William Stace, one of Wellington's men at Waterloo.

Willis brought his bride home to this country and in 1836 they purchased 200 acres of land near the juncture of Owego Creek and Susquehanna River from George Pumpelly, a classmate of Nathaniel's at Yale. Here he built a charming house which he named Glen Mary in his wife's honor. Willis proved himself no great shakes as a farmer, but his literary work flourished. Their stay at Glen Mary was marred only by the death of their small daughter Imogen, who was buried on the property not far from the house.

Nathaniel's brother Richard Stovis Willis visited them and was enchanted by his sister-in-law. He wrote a series of musical pieces called Glenmary Waltzes which he dedicated to Mary. (Note that he changed the spelling.)



In 1842 a combination of unfortunate circumstances forced Willis to sell Glen Mary and to leave Owego. Shortly thereafter, Mary died, but we do not have the date. In 1846 Nathaniel married Cornelia Grinnell of New Bedford, Mass. They settled at Idlewild, on the Hudson just north of West Point. He died there on January 20, 1867, his wife and several children surviving.

Since then Glen Mary has been used for a number of purposes, including a home for George Ingersoll and his family.

It has been a nursing home, and a private institution for mentally disturbed members of wealthy families. At this writing it is still standing. It looks pretty good for 156 years of age.

The editors of a revitalized New York Mirror - Nathaniel P. Willis and George P. Morris - were subjects of a cartoon in the rival Broadway Journal in 1845. New York, by this time, had become the country's communications center.

The Essential Wiswell Trivia

Ingersoll Family Genealogical Charts

Purpose

Many Ingersoll people are mentioned in the foregoing text; it may be difficult for writer and reader alike mentally to place each person in his proper niche in the multi-generational descent. A series of charts are provided as an aid. Most of these are for the Richard of Salem line, simply because there were more of them.

The charts are identified thus:

Title	Designation
Some Descendants of Richard of Salem, His Son George and Grandsons George and John	A
Descendants of Richard of Salem, His Son George and His Grandson Joseph - I	B
Descendants of Richard of Salem, His Son George and His Grandson Joseph II	C
Descendants of Richard of Salem, His Son George and His Grandson Samuel - I	D
Descendants of Richard of Salem, His Son George and His Grandson Samuel - II	E
Descendants of Richard of Salem, His Son George and His Grandson Samuel - III	F
Descendants of Richard of Salem, His Son John and Grandsons John and Nathaniel	G
Descendants of Richard of Salem, His Son John and Grandsons Richard and Samuel	H
Lines of Descent of Some Descendants of John Ingersoll of Huntington	I
Lines of Descent of Some Descendants of John Ingersoll of Westfield	J

Cross Reference

A cross-reference follows, listing the genealogical numbers of the Ingersolls involved (as assigned by Mrs. Avery) and indicating the charts on which those numbers and associated names appear.

Ingersoll Family Genealogical Charts
Cross Reference

No.	Charts	No.	Charts	No.	Charts	No.	Charts
1	A,D,E,F,G,H,I,J	50	A	115	C,J	174	B
2	A,B,C,D,E,F,GHI	51	A	116	C	175	B
3	G,I	52	A,J	117	I	176	C
4	I	53	J	118	D	177	C
5	I	54	B,D	120	D	178	C
6	I	55	B	121	D	179	C
7	I,J	56	B,J	123	D,J	180	D
8	A,I,J	57	B,I	129	E	181	D
9	A,I,J	58	B	130	E	182	D
10	C,I,J	59	C	131	E	183	D
11	D,E,F,G	61	C	132	E,J	186	E
12	G,J	62	J	133	F	187	E
13	G,J	67	D,J	134	F	188	E
14	C,I,J	68	D,J	135	J	189	E
15	H	69	D	136	F	190	J
16	I,J	71	D	137	F	192	E
17	H	72	D,J	139	F	193	E
18	A,B,J	73	E	140	F	194	E
19	A	74	E	142	G	196	F
21	A,J	75	I	143	E	197	F
22	A,I	78	J	144	G	198	F
23	A	79	J	146	G	199	F
24	J	80	F,J	147	G,I	200	F
25	I	81	F	148	H	201	F
26	J	82	F,J	148	H	204	F,J
27	J	83	I	149	H	205	G
28	B,I,J	84	F,J	150	H	206	G
29	B,I	85	F,J	152	H	207	G
30	C,I	87	G	153	H	208	G
31	D	88	G	156	A	209	G
32	D,J	90	H	157	A	210	G
34	E	91	H	158	A	211	G
35	F,I	92	A	159	A	214	I
36	F	93	A,I	160	A	216	H
37	F	94	A	162	B	217	H
39	I,J	95	A	163	B	219	H
40	G,I,J	99	A	164	B	221	J
41	J	100	A	166	B	222	H
42	G	101	A	167	B	224	H
43	H,J	102	B,I	168	B,J	226	H
44	I	103	B	169	B	227	H
46	A,I	105	B	170	B	228	H
47	A	106	B	171	B	229	H
48	A,J	111	B	172	B	231	H
49	A	113	C	173	B	233	H

Ingersoll Family Genealogical Charts
Cross Reference, Cont.

No.	Charts	No.	Charts	No.	Charts	No.	Charts
234	H	294	E	370	C	448	E
235	H	296	F	371	C	455	J
236	A,I	297	F	372	C	464	I
239	A	298	F	373	D	480	I
240	A	299	F	374	D	490	I
241	A	300	F	375	D	525	I
242	A	301	F	376	E	561	J
243	A	302	I	379	E	564	I
244	A	303	F,J	380	E	614	J
245	A	305	G	381	E,J	655	I
246	B	307	G	382	E	675	J
247	B	310	G	383	E	778	I
249	B	312	G	384	E	779	I
250	B	313	G	386	E		
252	B	314	H	388	E		
253	B	317	H	390	E		
254	B	318	J	391	E		
255	B	319	H	392	E		
256	B	320	H	393	E		
257	B	323	H	394	E		
258	C	324	H	395	E		
260	C	325	H	398	E		
261	C	326	H	399	E		
262	C	330	H	400	E		
263	I	331	H	402	E		
264	C	333	H	404	E		
265	C	334	H	405	E		
267	D	336	H	414	F		
269	D	347	H	417	F		
270	D	348	H	420	G		
276	E	351	A	421	G		
277	E	352	A	422	G		
278	E	354	A	423	G		
279	E	355	A	427	H		
280	E	357	A	428	H		
282	E	358	A	433	H		
283	E	359	B	435	H		
284	E	361	B	436	H		
285	E	362	B	439	H		
286	E	363	C	440	H		
288	E	365	C	441	H		
289	E	366	C	442	A		
290	E	367	I	443	C		
291	E	368	C	445	C		
292	E	369	C	447	E		

Chart A

Some Descendants of Richard Ingersoll of Salem, His Son George and His Grandsons George and John

Chart A

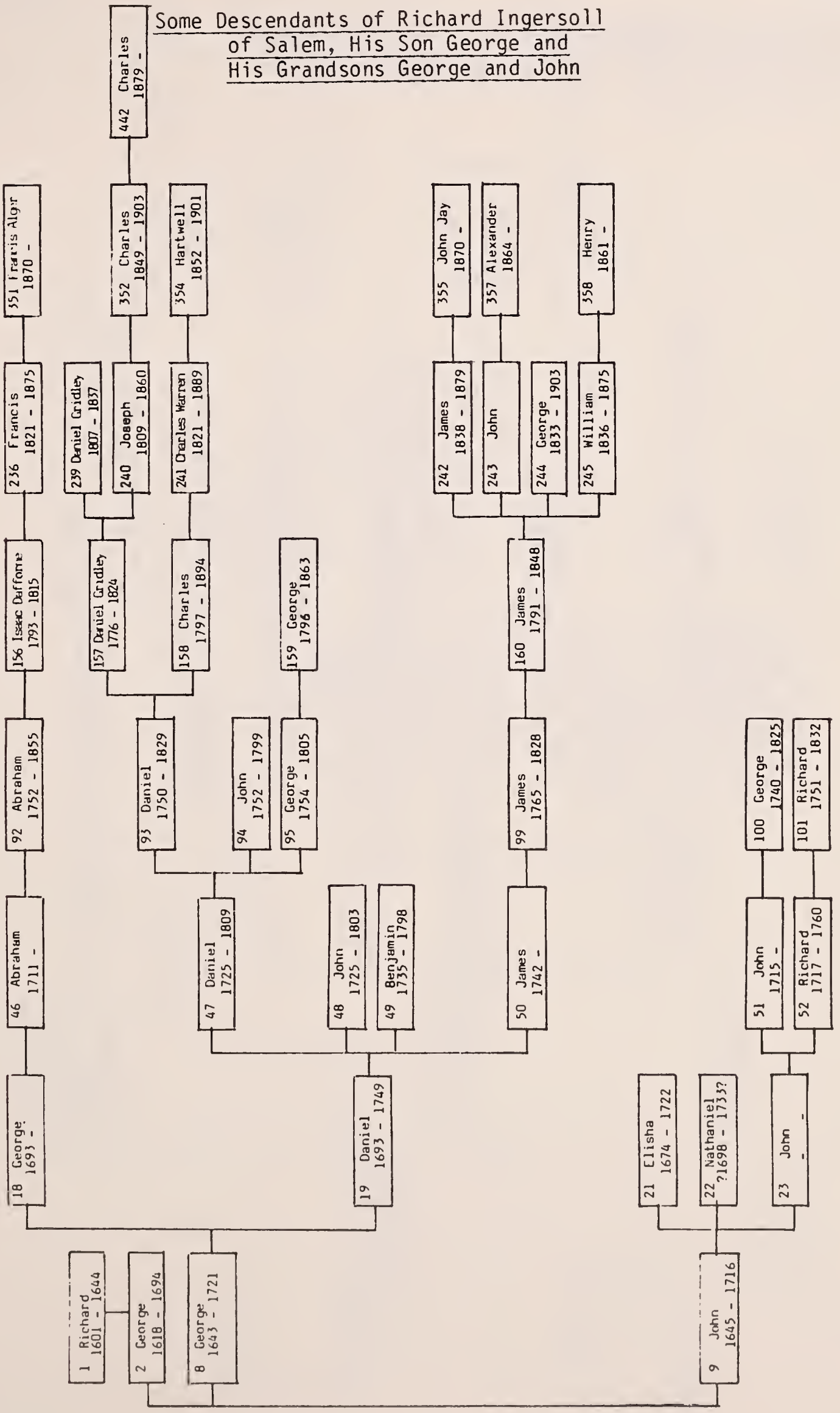


Chart B

Some Descendants of Richard Ingersoll Of Salem, His Son George and His Grandson Joseph - Part I

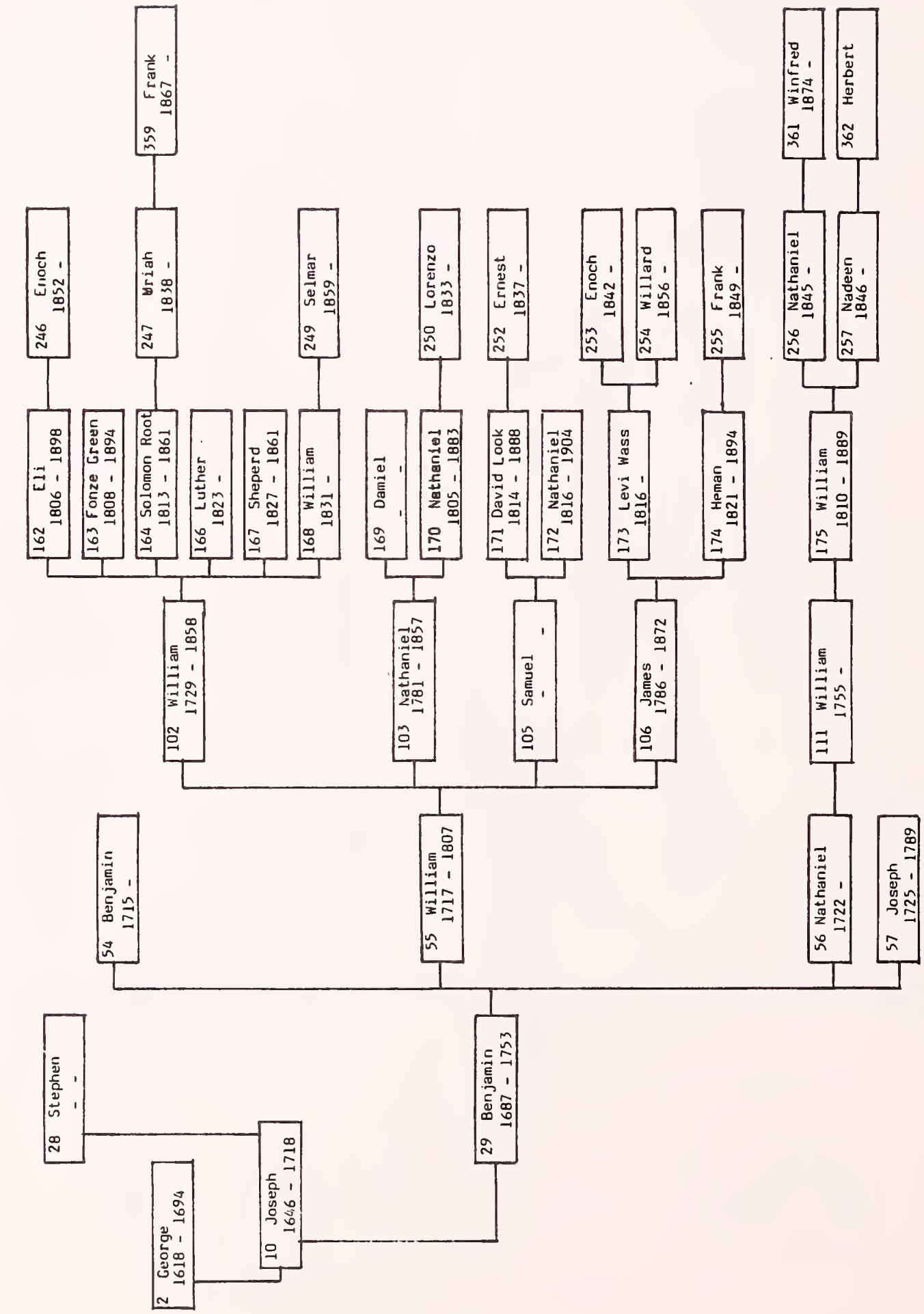


Chart C

Chart C

Some Descendants of Richard Ingersoll of Salem, His Son George and His Grandson Joseph - Part II

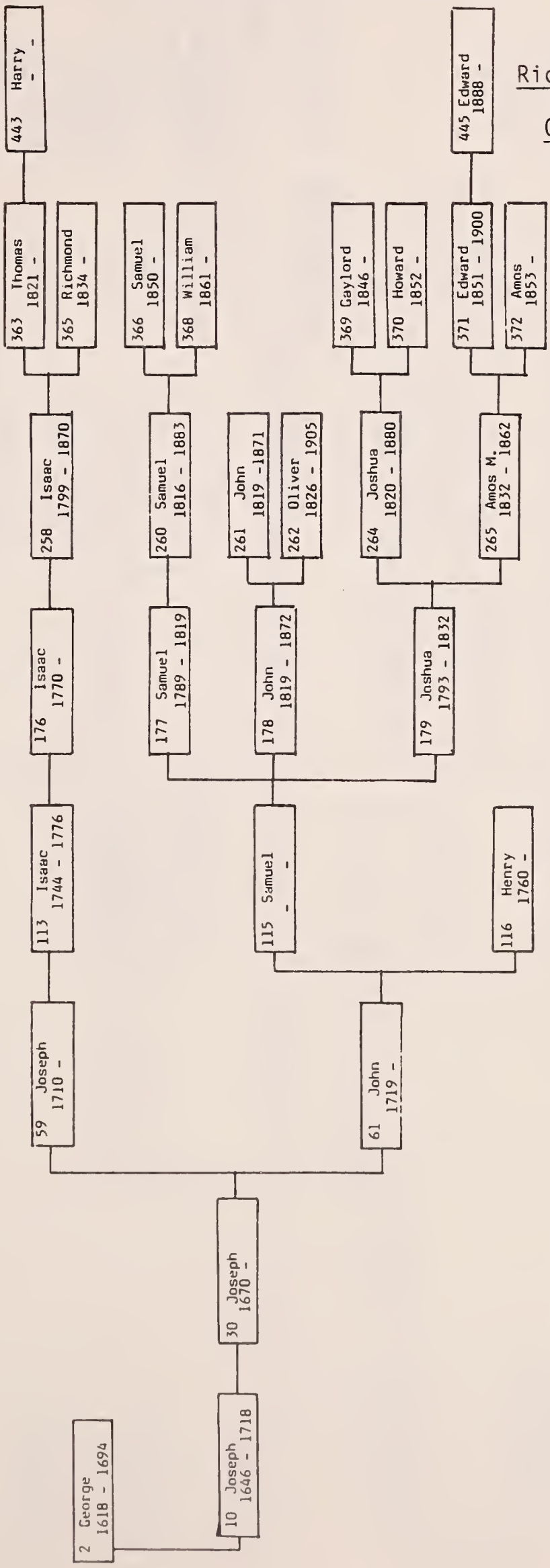


Chart D

Chart D

Some Descendants of Richard Ingersoll of Salem His Son George and His Grandson Samuel - Part I

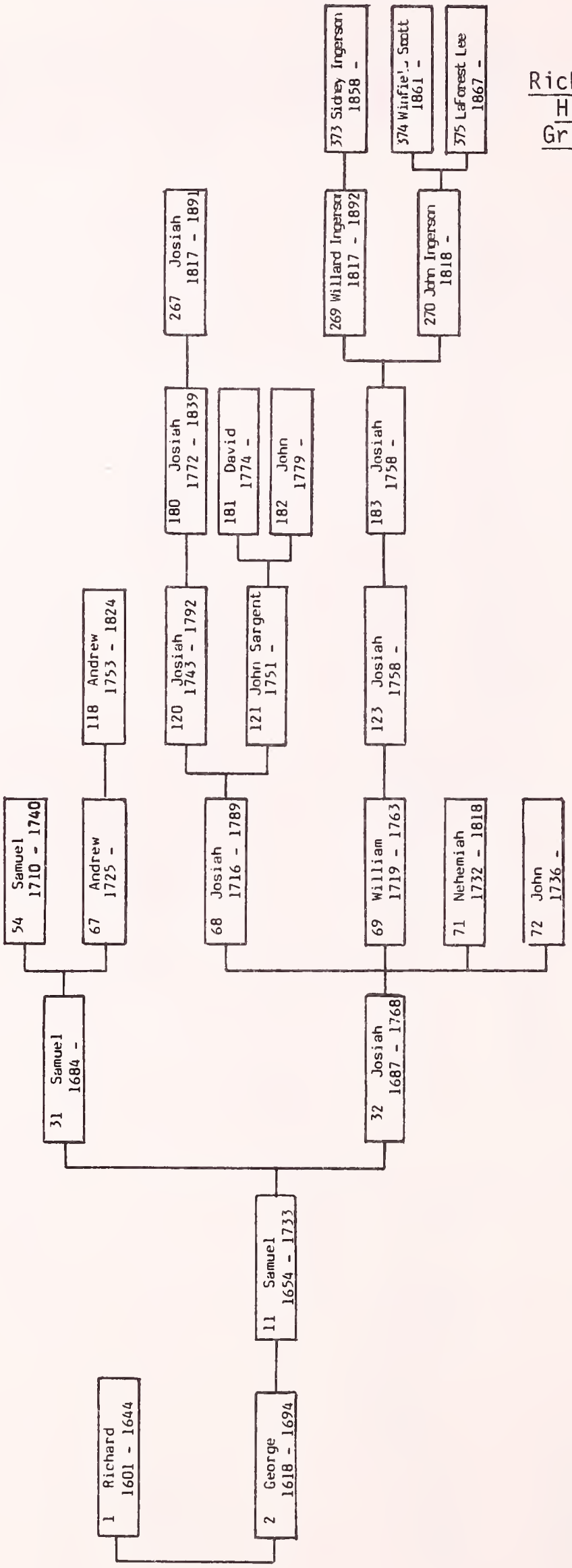


Chart E

Some Descendants of Richard Ingersoll of Salem, His Son George and His Grandson Samuel - Part II

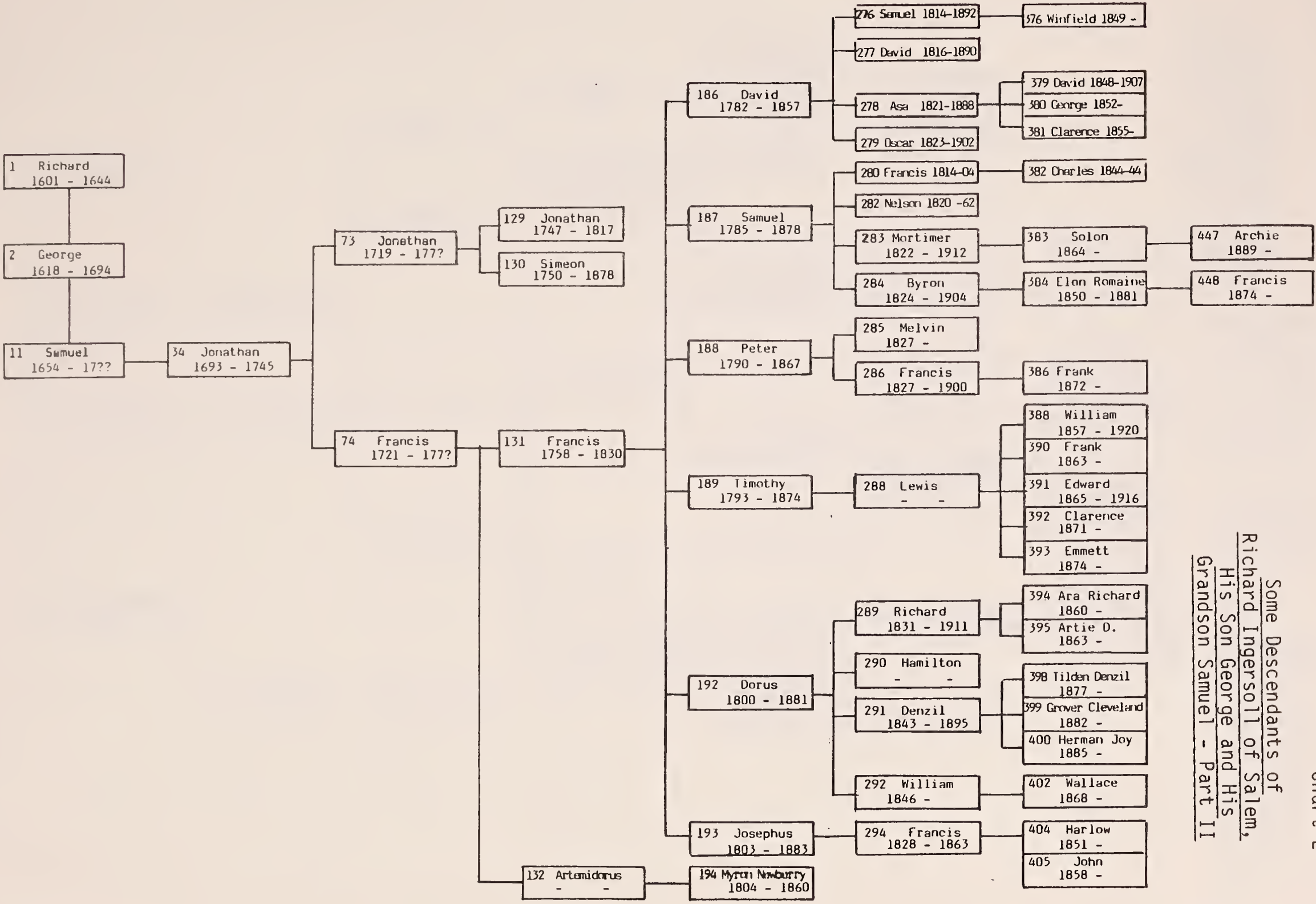


Chart F

Chart F

Some Descendants of Richard Ingersoll of Salem, His Son George and His Grandson Samuel - Part III

1 Richard 1601 - 1644

2 George 1618 - 1694

11 Samuel 1654 - 1722

35 David 1691 - 1730

36 Solomon 1699 - 1777

37 Joel 1709 -

80 David 1724 -

81 Sargent 1726 -

82 Medifer 1729 - 1759

84 - Benjamin 1735 - 1772

85 Samuel 1740 -

133 David 1750 - 1773

134 William 1767 - 1830

136 Nathaniel 1753 - 1834

137 Zebulon 1757 - 1826

139 James Dalton - -1809

140 Jared - -1871

196 David 1773 - 1844

197 William 1803 - 1854

198 Charles Medifer - -

199 Nathaniel Lowe 1790 - 1870

200 Zebulon 1800 - 1873

201 Geo. Washington 1803 - 1860

204 John 1788 - 1815

296 Daniel Sargent 1837 - 1901

297 John Norton Sal. 1845 -

298 Charles 1819 - 1875

299 John Howard 1828 -

300 Augustus Marsh. 1840 -

301 Edward Chase 1843 - 1883

303 John Gage 1815 - 1889

414 Frank Allen 1845 -

417 William Medifer 1847 -

Chart G

Chart G

Some Descendants of Richard Ingersoll of Salem His Son John and His Grandsons John and Nathaniel

1 Richard 1601 - 1644

3 John 1623 - 1683

12 John 1644 - 1694

40 Samuel - -

87 Nathaniel 1710 -

88 John 1712 - 1768

146 John 1742 - 1812

147 Samuel 1744 - 1804

142 Samuel 1747 - 1807

143 Jonathon 1751 - 1840

144 John 1756 - 1840

205 Nathaniel 1778 - 18??

206 George Hodges 1780 - 1864

207 John 1796 - 1829

208 Nathaniel 1798 - 1854

209 David 1803 - 1837

210 Daniel Brey 1777 - 1864

211 Nathaniel - -

305 Nathaniel 1825 - 1885

307 Abram 1810 - 1892

310 Thomas 1822 - 1859

312 Daniel 1828 - 1862

313 Peter 1794 - 1846

420 George William 1852 -

421 Lewis Melvin 1861 - 1897

422 Frederick 1864 -

423 Samuel 1859 -

42 John 1674 -

13 Nathaniel 1647 - 1683

Chart H

Some Descendants of Richard Ingersoll of Salem His Son John and His Grandsons Richard and Samuel

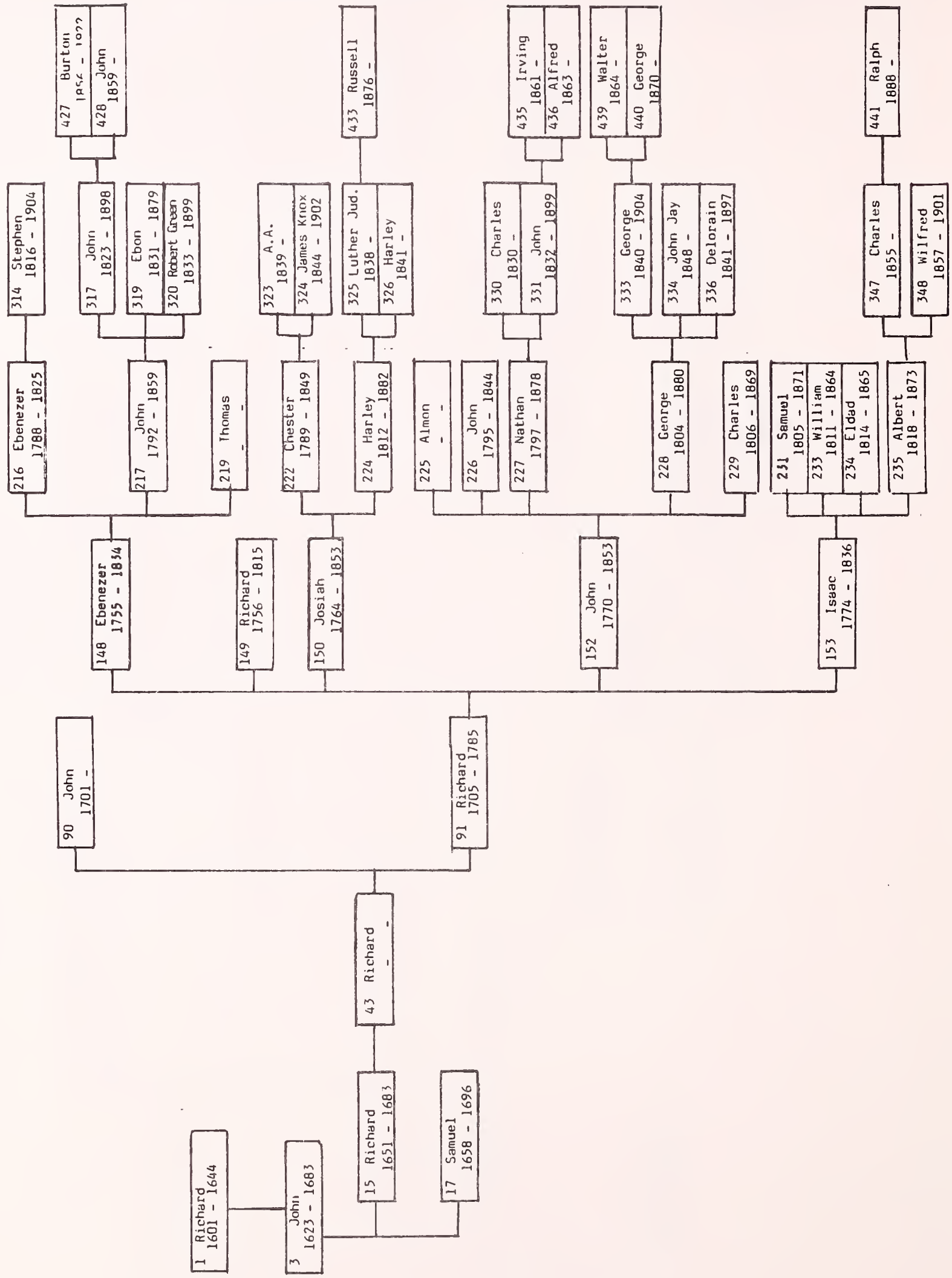


Chart I

Chart I

Lineal Descent of Some Descendants of John Ingersoll of Huntington

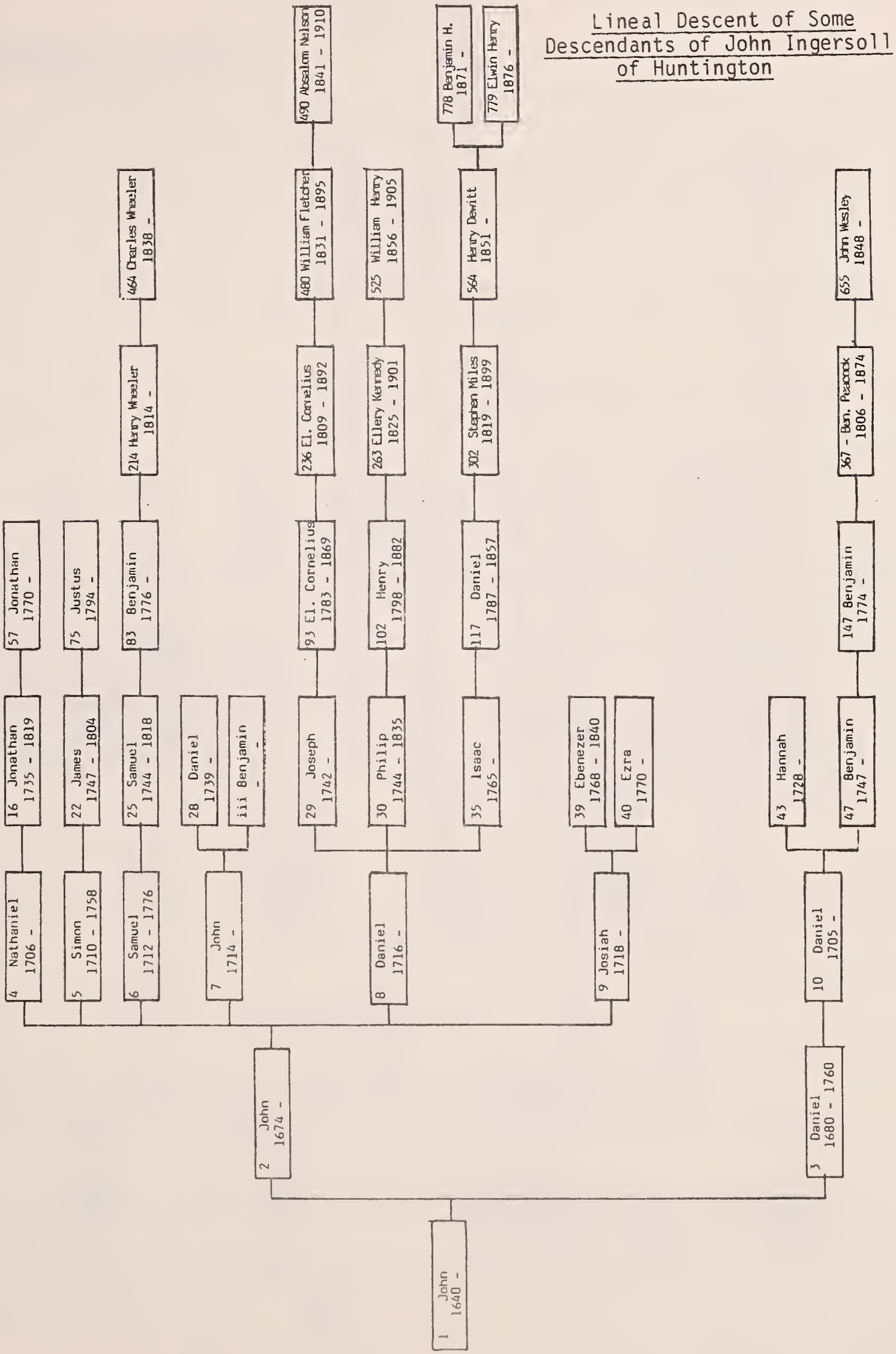


Chart J

Chart J

Lineal Descent of Some Descendants of John Ingersoll of Westfield

1 John 1615 - 1684

7 Hester 1665 -

8 Thomas 1668 -

9 John 1669 - 1750

10 Jonathan 1681 -

11 Thomas 1692 - 1748

12 Moses 1694 - 1751

13 David 1689 - 1773

14 Jonathan 1713 -

16 Jared 1722 - 1781

18 Jonathan 1715 - 1755

21 John 1731 - 1792

24 Peter 1733 - 1785

26 William 1724 - 1815

27 David 1742 - 1796

28 Deodat 1740 -

32 Jonathan 1747 -

39 Jared 1749 - 1822

40 Oliver 1740 - 1789

41 Jared 1745 - 1835

43 Thomas 1750 - 1812

48 Moses 1755 - 1834

52 Jared 1757 - 1825

53 David 1759 - 1839

56 Calvin 1768 - 1850

62 Ebenezer 1793 - 1860

67 Grace 1787 - 1816

68 Ralph Isaacs 1789 - 1872

72 Jonathan 1804 - 1875

73 Edward 1810 - 1883

78 Chas. Jared 1782 - 1862

79 Joseph Reed 1786 - 1868

80 Edward 1790 - 1941

82 Daniel 1773 - 1823

84 Jared 1786 - 1871

85 Laura 1775 - 1868

115 Winthrop 1785 - 1863

123 Ebebezer 1780 - 1833

132 Erastus 1782 - 1851

135 Moses 1790 - 1855

168 Philo 1794 - 1829

172 Robt. Leroy 1819 - 1886

190 Chas. Robt. 1822 - 1903

204 Henry Will. 1854 - 1883

221 Chas. Lamb. 1808 - 1884

303 Hiram 1824 - 1903

318 Orville 1818 - 1892

381 Harmon 1818 - 1892

455 Oliver 1837 - 1914

561 Arthur 1845 -

viii Robert Haw. 1860 -

614 Royal Rod. 1847 -

675 William 1878 -

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Compiler's Lament

I have read or consulted the following books in gathering the assortment of facts I used or misused or even abused in the construction of the foregoing epic. In the case of a book containing a broad spectrum of data, I have read only the part dealing with the subject I was then avidly pursuing. Usually, when I quoted directly I referred to the source, but I'm sure there were times when I forgot to do this. I am not here apologizing for my failures; this is only a warning.

I intended to list these books in groups according to the times and types of action discussed. This is not always practical if, indeed, it is even possible. The categories are broad. Within each group listing is alphabetic by author, editor, compiler or sponsor, whatever.

I am well aware that a bibliography is seldom read and is always dull. Its presence here, however, indicates that I did not make up everything recited in this masterpiece.

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New England Historical and Genealogical Register XV

The Compiler's Closing Words

Any reader who has come thus far deserves a round of hearty applause. (Now, off-stage, we can hear the sound of one hand, clapping.)

This is the time when the tiresome speaker says, "And in conclusion ...." and prattles on for many minutes.

I had a bushel-basket full of odd memos and clippings, tear sheets, notes in an instantaneously devised short hand now defying decipherment, folders crammed with irreplaceable minutia no longer comprehensible or even relevant. There were notebooks full of reminders of tremendous importance whose significance is no longer discernable, books bulging with wads of unreadable pencilled notes folded between pages, pages (nay, volumes) of brilliant ideas once gleaming like stars now revealing only a dull tarnish. This book came from a small part of that melange.

In the present text you will find hints, or even promises, of things to come which do not in fact appear. I apologize for that. Those subjects are still in the basket.

The sometimes fanciful arrangement of the segments has disrupted the chronology in which they were written. On occasion I refer to something to appear on future pages when, in fact, it has been expounded, at length, fifty pages earlier. And the reverse is also true. I could correct these lapses but I haven't the guts to disturb all of those beautifully chosen words and phrases. Indulge me, please.

Now this thing must end. I still have enough information to fill another volume of equal size. It would be foolish of me to say I would do it.

Thanks for your patience.

Alphabetic Index of Proper names

Many people are mentioned in the foregoing pages, including historical figures. The names of all of these, famous or infamous, are listed here in alphabetic order, with page numbers indicating the places of relevant entries.

Often several persons will have identical names. Each listing is so identified as to permit a distinction. Ingersolls cited by Mrs. Avery carry the descendant numbers she assigned to them.

Married women are listed under married and maiden names. In the entry for her married name, her family name is shown in parentheses following her given name. Thus:

Married surname, given name (maiden name)

If a woman was married previously, the surname of her previous husband is shown following the maiden name, in a separate set of parentheses.

Nick-names are rare, usually within quotation marks.

A separate index of names on Ingersoll Family Genealogical Charts is provided on pages 351 and 352.

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